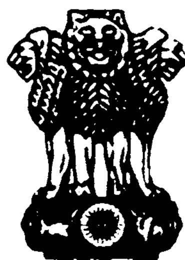


Dr. S. C. Jamir

Hon'ble Governor of Odisha

COLLECTION OF SPEECHES

RAJ BHAVAN
ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR



सत्यमेव जयते

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Preface

The idea of this book, a collection of my speeches delivered on different occasions as Governor of Odisha, occurred to me when I made an earnest effort to reach out to a wider audience and make it aware of my views on a variety of topics. In the process of putting this book together I realised the importance of communicating my thoughts in lucid language.

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for having bestowed upon me the power to believe in my passion and pursue my dreams. I also thank my wife, and the rest of my family who supported and encouraged me all the time.

I am privileged to serve Odisha as Governor. It is a beautiful state with a rich cultural heritage. It has vast potential and possibilities for development and prosperity. Education is a vital sector which can transform these possibilities into a reality. Odisha has emerged as a hub of higher education in the country to the delight of all. It has been my consistent endeavour to bring about radical changes in the higher education system with a focus on quality education, research and innovations to enable our universities to compete with the best in the country and abroad. I hope my speeches will help address several of the complex issues that confront our nation today.

The speeches have been selected after much thought. For the sake of clarity, the book is divided into ten sections centering on the following key themes: higher education, national & international, religion & philosophy, literature & culture, ecology & tribal development, youth, children and women, development & public administration, health & research, media and great statesmen. This book would bring to the fore my view on several core issues and the initiatives and endeavours required to deal with them effectively.

I fervently wish that the book containing my speeches will help readers develop an intimate understanding of my worldview and script a bright future for Odisha and for our nation. That would give me immense satisfaction and I would feel that my endeavour has been amply rewarded.

S.C. Jamir
Governor, Odisha



Introduction

This book is a collection of speeches delivered by Dr. S.C. Jamir, Hon'ble Governor of Odisha on various programmes/occasions inside Odisha and at different places within the country and abroad from 2013 till date.

Dr. Jamir is among the seniormost political leaders in the country at present. In Indian politics, he is a popular figure from the North East and earns respect across the political spectrum. He is acknowledged as the architect of Modern Nagaland and has served the state as Chief Minister for four times. Having a career spanning over six decades during which he has also served as Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Ministers, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Lal Bahadur Sastri, a member in the Union Ministry during the Prime Ministership of Smt. Indira Gandhi and as the Governor of as many as four states. He has represented India at the highest forums of politics and diplomacy. A man of vast knowledge, experience, outlook and vision he has achieved a distinct identity as a statesman who stands by his ideals and does everything he believes is right for the people and the country.

As a statesman, he reposes an abiding faith in the great destiny of our country and its people and his speeches convey this inspiring vision. Readers will gain fascinating insights from his speeches. The speeches are carefully selected to present before readers his line of thinking on a wide range of subjects.

The world has witnessed many great speeches that changed the course of history. I hope, this collection of speeches will be a lasting source of inspiration to common people and leaders alike. The readers may find in the speeches a source of great pleasure and wisdom.

C.J. Venugopal
Principal Secretary to Governor



Acknowledgement

Selecting speeches of Hon'ble Governor is a challenging task as all the speeches are unique in terms of presentation, content, depth and message. However, the task was made easier by undertaking a collective effort to make a proper selection. All those involved in the process therefore deserve a special mention and thanks.

To begin with, I feel deeply indebted to Hon'ble Governor for giving his consent to go ahead with the proposal for publication of this collection of speeches and entrusting me with the responsibility. Personally, I have enjoyed being associated with the process of finalising the speeches. I would also like to express my gratitude to our Principal Secretary, Shri C.J. Venugopal for providing support and encouragement all along in the publication of this book.

I would like to thank Prof. Jatindra Kumar Nayak and Prof. Ram Chandro Misro, the two distinguished members of Editorial Committee, for helping in the process of selection and editing. My special thanks go to Public Relations Officers to Governor, Late Sarada Prasad Mishra and Sangram Deobhanj whose valuable inputs and thoughts immensely helped me in putting this volume together.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Shri Soumya Narayan Panigrahi, Shri Arunanchal Dash, Shri Himansu Narayan Patnaik, Mr. Lanusanen Imsong, Shri Rakshak Kumar Nayak, Shri Binod Kumar Singha, Shri Pramod Kumar Dey, Shri Sikhar Pradhan, Shri Saiba Behera, Shri Manoranjan Mohanty and Shri Chita Ranjan Satapathy and others who saw this book through, to all those who provided support and assisted with the editing, proof-reading and design of the book.

Last and not the least, I thank all those who have been with me over the course of the publication of this volume whose names I have failed to mention.

Pradeep Kumar Rath
Personal Secretary to Governor

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CONTOURS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

45th Convocation of Utkal University

As the Chancellor of Utkal University, I deem it a pleasure and a privilege to extend a hearty welcome to the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. The University is proud and grateful to Hon'ble President for gracing the 45th Convocation of the University being held on the 50th year of the establishment of the campus as the Chief Guest. Shri Mukherjee, is a distinguished public figure having over five decades of exemplary service to the nation in Government as well as Parliament and he has been honoured with the prestigious Padma Vibhushan Award and Best Parliamentarian Award for his outstanding contribution. He has served as Union Cabinet Minister holding key portfolios under several Prime Ministers of India. His leadership in the Ministry of Finance, External Affairs and other Ministries is well acclaimed nationally and internationally. Sir, it is indeed a great day for the state of Odisha and Utkal University for having you in our midst. Utkal University, which in the past had hosted great personalities like Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Shri Krishnakant, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Shri Morajee Desai and the present Vice President Mohammad Hamid Ansari, is now blessed with your august presence. Sir, I thank you from the core of my heart. I am sure that your enlightened words would kindle the torches of the future. We all look forward to your Convocation Address.

I welcome and congratulate the recipients of the degree of Honoris Causa, who have honoured the University by accepting the degree. I am sure their dedication and commitment to the cause they held dear to their life will be highly inspirational to our young men and women to excel in life and bring glory to the motherland. I wish all the recipients will continue to serve the society with renewed vigour.

I also congratulate the recipients of other degrees and the students receiving gold medals for excelling in studies. They all have made us proud with their success and achievements. I share their joy and happiness. This is just the beginning and I am sure as they go out of the portals of the university to face a highly competitive world and a world full of opportunities and seek their fortunes with the knowledge they have

received here, the values hey have acquired and I am sure, with hard work, sincerity and commitment they will achieve many more successes in future and make the alma mater and the state proud.

Odisha is a state having rich tradition, history, culture and heritage. I must remind you of Odisha's rich contribution to learning and literature. Poets like Jayadev have mesmerized the whole of India. Buddha Vihars of Lalitgiri and Puspagiri were no less significant than Nalanda. Continuing the tradition, Utkal University, the Mother University of the state has emerged as a premier university of India. It has a glorious history and has achieved several significant milestones, played pivotal role in building modern Odisha and it has been playing a key role in giving the country efficient human resource. We are all aware that the alumni of this University have excelled in diverse fields like bureaucracy, judiciary, public life, science and technology, creative arts and, in fact, in all other fields. We find students of this University making a mark in various walks of life. We must all be proud of them and simultaneously leave no stone unturned to uphold our reputation.

We have heard the Vice-Chancellor's Report. I congratulate the Vice-Chancellor and the University for the introduction of the Choice Based Credit Semester System. We are confident that the convergence of knowledge and innovation will take Utkal University to greater heights. I am happy to note the achievements of students in terms of placement and academic laurels. I congratulate the teachers for success of their students and I expect them to not only educate, nurture and enthuse the young generation but also lead by example. The Post Graduate Departments deserve credit for organising a number of seminars, symposia, conferences, refresher courses and orientation programmes and research activities and hope they will continue it in future for knowledge assimilation and dissemination.

University education has three sacred goals: acquisition and nurturing of knowledge, building capacity amongst the students for the application of the knowledge acquired, and fostering great ideas and ideals. The University is the only place where such goals can be guiding

principles. I call upon the students, the teachers and the academics present here to be cognizant of all these three goals.

Universities hold the key to building the India of tomorrow and they must be viewed as the repositories of a nation's scholarly and intellectual wealth. Therefore it is required that they must continue to reform, restructure and rejuvenate. I am sure Utkal University will always be at the forefront towards enhancing scholarly and intellectual wealth of the country.

Noble laureate Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore had written in his "Geetanjali", 'Ï have brought my light to join the carnival of lamps'. These words have great meaning and relevance. My dear students, with your efforts you can create a greater nation. Do not think that your efforts are too small to make any big difference. You always think big, work with determination and pursue your goals even in the face of adversities and learn to convert adversities into opportunities. You must always try to achieve excellence in your endeavours. As students of a young and dynamic nation, you must take a leadership role. I have every hope and confidence that with your knowledge, positive action and thinking you can brighten the future of Odisha and India.

Further, I want you to remember that to be truly prosperous, you must learn to give as you learn to receive. If you draw water from a tap continuously without caring to fill the water tank, water will stop flowing out in a while. Therefore, it is important that at every step you see how your knowledge can be used for the welfare of society that sustains us.

With these words, I once again congratulate the recipients of degrees, diplomas, medals and awards and wish them the very best in life. I also once again place on record our sincere obligation to Hon'ble President of India for having with us today. Lastly, I wish that Utkal University may continue to prepare enlightened citizens for tomorrow, attain further height and soon develop into a centre of excellence.

Jai Hind.

First Alexander Duff Memorial Lecture at Scottish Church College, Kolkata

I am indeed delighted to be in your midst, today, on this august occasion of your 183rd Foundation day and consider it to be a great honour and privilege to deliver the first Alexander Duff Memorial Lecture. My sense of joy is doubled because you have chosen this humble alumnus of your illustrious institution for this honour. What greater honour for me and for all of you, students, than to belong to the illustrious company of such great sons of India like Swami Vivekananda and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose among others!

Exactly 61 years ago, yours truly, an unsure and gawky tribal boy from the wilderness of the Naga Hills had stepped in to the hallowed portals of this great academic institution. It was for the first time that he was moving out of his cocooned existence in the hills to a big city like Kolkata. He felt a sense of aware and loss at first but this soon turned into a sense of belonging. Thanks to the affection and care of his Principal, the venerable Rev. John Kellas and other teachers. To this day, your guest remembers, with a sense nostalgia and gratitude, the parental love and guidance provided by those kindred souls that shaped his future. Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, I have no hesitation in saying that I wouldn't have been what I'm today, without the contribution of my revered teachers during those memorable two years that I spent here. Since then, I have always felt proud to be a Caledonian.

An institution like ours is not just made up of bricks and mortars, beautiful Victorian arches, facades and columns but by the vision and ideals of great men like Rev. Alexander Duff. Born to James Duff and Jean Rattray in the little parish of Moulin in the heart of Scotland on April 25, 1806, Alexander Duff studied at St. Andrews University. He was a gifted child and was greatly influenced by Milton's "Paradise Lost" which he read at the young age of 15. When he was made the Librarian of the University Missionary Society, he decided to devote his life to the Church and its mission. It was his

belief that God had sent him to perform a noble cause. This belief found fruition when Dr. Ferrie, Professor of Church History at St. Andrews University announced in 1829 that Alexander Duff was to be the first missionary of the Church of Scotland to India. He was a young but learned man of 23 then, having mastered German, Russian, Persian, Arabic, Chinese and Hebrew.

Duff arrived in Calcutta on 27th May, 1830 and promptly set about giving substance to his ideas. After visiting a number of schools he was quick to assess that Indian students schooled in the vernacular language were not receiving adequate education. He visualised his mission in India to be two-fold: to impart to the natives a liberal western education in the English language and to spread the gospel among Indian belonging to the upper middle classes. Yet, he was never a dogmatist and never allowed conflict on grounds of religion. His efforts at setting up the first educational institution of his dreams met with a number of hurdles but he didn't give up. He found in Raja Rammohan Roy, great Hindu scholar and social reformer of the times, a perfect ally who understood him and extended full support to his ideas and activities believing those to be in the larger interests of the society. With Roy's unstinted support was born the first of his institutions on 13th July, 1830, the baby that grew up to be what this great institution is today. In his farewell address to the missionaries before leaving India in 1835, Lord William Bentick, one of the finest Governor Generals of British India paid Alexander Duff the ultimate tribute and I quote, "Encourage education with all your means. I would give you an example in support of this advice: the school founded exactly on the principles of humble, pious and learned missionary by estimable Mr. Duff that has been attended with such unparalleled success. His labours, divested of all human power, create no distrust."

Alexander Duff devised the policy of an educational mission which greatly influenced that of the colonial government. This policy was encapsulated in a pamphlet that he wrote: A New Era of the English Language and Literature in India. The extent to which his ideas influenced governmental policy of the times is evident from

an official minute adopted in 1835 which stated that in higher education, the object of the British government in India should be the promotion of European science and literature among the natives of India and that all funds appropriated for purposes of education would be employed on English education alone.

This, of course, generated a fierce debate between the proponents of this school of thought and the so-called "orientalists" who saw value in the traditional learning of India and wished to support and encourage it. The upshot of this was that Lord Auckland, the then Governor General adopted in 1839 a policy which was a compromise between the two perspectives. Notwithstanding, English became the tool for a generation of Indians through which to understand the British institutions of government, besides the liberal sciences and philosophies of the West. Such understanding led to a share for them in governance and constituted one of the foundations on which eventual self-rule was built.

Alexander Duff's efforts at spreading Christianity among the educated Hindus of the time may not have achieved spectacular success. However, his propagation of western liberal education through the English language and his emphasis on a confluence of religion and science not only influenced a generation of educated Indians but ignited the Renaissance that was taking place in Bengal. This was undoubtedly his greatest contribution to India.

In later years, Duff gave much thought and time to the University of Calcutta (founded in 1857) which owes its examination system and the prominence given to physical sciences to his influence. In 1863, Sir Charles Trevelyan offered him the post of Vice Chancellor of the University. Unfortunately, he had to leave India because of his failing health. The Duff Hall, however, stands as a silent memorial to his work.

Here, I would like to mention another not-so-well known but significant contribution of Alexander Duff. It's how his ideas strengthened the efforts of Lord Bentick to establish a medical college in Calcutta. The Commission set up to actualise the proposal was

highly impressed with the positive response it received from Duff's Indian students during its visit to their institution. The students categorically stated that they would not be deterred b the scruples of religious traditionalism. The issue here was whether Hindu students aspiring to join the medical profession would have the religious sanction for touching cadavers which they must have to do for learning medical science. Duff's own submissions before the Commission further strengthened the Governor General's resolve and paved the way for establishment of a medical college in Calcutta in June 1835. His contribution was lauded by the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab in 1899 at a function in Lahore Medical College and I quote his words, "We are indebted because Alexander Duff was the pioneer in the efforts to show that the medical profession was compatible with the highest ideas of caste."

Alexander Duff epitomised the sacrifices and services of Christian missionaries in India, those who came before and after him. By his own admission, India occupied a special place in his heart. Let me quote from his address in reply to the Bethune Society's farewell memorial, "Whether my days be few or many, whether my old age be one of decrepitude or of privileged usefulness, my best and latest thoughts will be still of India. Wherever I wander, wherever I roam, wherever I labour, wherever I rest, my heart will be still in India".

It will be a real tribute to his memory if we continue to remember the sterling contributions of thousands of Christian missionaries, both known and unknown, to India's journey as a modern nation. Christianity came to India, even before it reached the western shores. St. Thomas visited India as a Christian missionary in A.D. 52. The stream continued to flow through the centuries from countries far and wide. It is not humanly possible to recount the seminal work done by the missionaries in India. However, let me endeavour to mention the contributions made by a few prominent men and women in the two major fields of education and health, that too within a limited time span of 18^{th} century onwards.

I have already recounted, albeit briefly, the contribution of Rev. Alexander Duff in the field of education. In addition, I must mention the name of William Carey, an English Baptist Minister who came to India before Alexander Duff in 1793 and worked in Serampore in Calcutta and other places. To him goes the credit of starting the Serampore College. In the 19^{th} century, several American Baptist missionaries came to the North Eastern parts of India with the mission to spread Christianity. Among the earliest I can remember was Dr. E.W. Clark who came and lived in a Naga village in 1876. In the process, these missionaries also promoted education among the natives by setting up mission schools. The higher than national average of literacy in the North Eastern States is undoubtedly a tribute to their efforts to spread education in this part of the country. It was not just the North East which received the attention of the Christian missionaries. Hundreds of missionary schools and colleges dotted across the length and breadth of the country are a testimony to their commitment to education in India. These educational institutions have not only imparted quality education but in the process produced generations of successful Indians who have later excelled in various fields and contributed to the progress of the country. What is more, the contribution of the missionaries was not merely limited to promoting elementary education but extended to higher and technical education as well.

Medical missionary work was started in Ludhiana in the North as far back as 1881 by the Greenfield sisters, Martha Rose and Kay. They were joined by Dr. Edith Mary Brown in 1893 who, a year later, founded the Christian Medical College and Hospital, the first medical school for women in Asia. This was followed by establishment of the prestigious CMC Vellore by the venerable American missionary, Ida Scudder in 1990.

Nursing as a service oriented vocation and mission is something close to Christianity. Christian Nursing schools are considered the best in discipline as well as training. They are much sought after for their professional expertise as well as healing touch.

The College of Nursing founded by the Greenfield sisters in Ludhiana is a glowing example of the efforts of Christian missionaries in this direction.

Ladies and gentlemen, Alexander Duff, the Greenfield sisters and Dr. Edith Mary Brown were, no doubt, far ahead of their times insofar as their world view of education was concerned. Much water has, however, flown under the Howrah Bridge since their days. We are living in a fast moving world. The changing dynamics of our society, therefore, demand a new approach to education to be adopted by the policy planners and educationists. We have today over 650 universities of which 43 are Central universities, 16 National Institutes of Technologies and three million colleges across the country. And yet, sadly, none of our universities figures in the Times (London) global list of top 100 universities of the world under 50 years of age. Why is it so? Have we sacrificed quality in our mad scramble for quantity? I believe, this is the most pertinent question you as academics should be asking and seeking an answer for.

The world today is driven by what Peter Drucker in his book *The Age of Discontinuity*_popularised as 'knowledge economy'. What does it mean? Put simply, it denotes a stage of development where economic benefits and job creation depend on knowledge of technological innovations and of management; where education is founded on research and creation of innovative ideas and not merely on manufacturing of degrees based on rote learning. As an institution of higher learning, we must ask ourselves this very important question: are we alive to the needs and challenges of our times? If so, have we undertaken sufficient number of original and innovative researches in our areas of learning? How many technical and scientific papers have we published in international journals of repute? How many from our faculties have received invites from international conferences? These might sound like inconvenient questions but if we are true to our salt, such questions need to be asked and answers given. To me, the basic aim of education is creation f ideas; ideas which can help transform our lives. Here, I'm reminded of what Swami Vivekananda wrote

and I quote, "If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library." So, let us undertake to inspire our students to ideate and to innovate, rather than master their text books through rote learning.

Ladies and gentlemen, as you are all aware, the Christian world view is suffused with Lord Jesus Christ's bountiful love, compassion, forgiveness, acceptance and service to all. Under this, service to mankind is perceived as service to God. Early Christian missionaries in India did not choose the comfort of cities in attending to their calling; they chose the most difficult and hard to access areas to serve. Besides, their care and service transcended boundaries of caste, creed and religion. Rather, they chose to serve the most downtrodden in the society-scheduled castes, tribes in remote areas, orphans, the sick and the destitute. There could be no better example of such selfless service than the Missionaries of Charity founded by our very own Mother Teresa. In the State of Odisha which I have the privilege to serve, the shining example of Dr. Graham Stuart Staines and his wife, Gladys Staines comes to mind. For almost half a century, the Staines had been serving leprosy patients in the tribal district of Keonjhar until Dr. Staines made the ultimate sacrifice of losing his life and those of his two young sons by the barbaric act of a fanatic who set their humble home on fire. Undeterred by this huge personal tragedy, Gladys Staines continues to serve the Lord through her service to the poor and the destitute. Such acts of bravery and faith should continue to inspire us in years to come.

Ladies and gentlemen, the contributions of Christian missionaries to the building of modern India are too vast to be recounted in course of a lecture like this. I have attempted to highlight merely a few examples that came to my mind. As I have said earlier, there would be hundreds and thousands of unsung heroes whose work may not have been chronicled at all. Not that they would have minded this. Instead, in the true spirit of service to the Lord, they would have

gone on attending to their call of duty unmindful of rewards or recognition.

Before I conclude, let me say a few words in ode t the historic city of Kolkata, the City of Joy as Dominique Lapierre rightly called it and to Bengal as a whole. Calcutta was not simply the capital of British India; in many ways it continues to be the cultural capital of India. Home to Rammohan Roy, Subhas Chandra Bose, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Satyajit Ray and scores of other Indian luminaries, Calcutta was the cradle of Indian renaissance; a nursery for education, the arts, literature, science, trade and industry. Regardless of the poverty and squalor in pockets f the city, Kolkata has a cosmopolitan air and warmth about it which is unique. In many ways, it is an India in microcosm. What is more, it is my most beloved city! Not only have I spent two of my most formative and productive years in this great city, I have always loved to come back here time and again. I do not think, the venerable Alexander Duff would have found and other city more congenial for his work than Calcutta.

What about Bengal? The role played by it in India's awakening is comparable to that of Italy in European renaissance. As Gopal Krishna Gokhale so befittingly declared, what Bengal thinks today, the rest of the country thinks tomorrow.

What these few words, I thank the Principal and all of you for giving me this opportunity to pay my tributes to a great man and for savouring some beautiful memories of my days in the Scottish Church College.

Jai Hind.

88th General Body Meeting of the Association of the Indian Universities

It gives me immense pleasure to be with you all today for the inauguration of the 88th Annual General Body Meeting of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) hosted by KIIT University. I am told that this annual event is known as the Vice-Chancellors' Conference that provides a platform to administrators and academicians of member universities for debate and deliberations on important issues of higher education in the country. It is heartening that the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), a body that first came up during the British period in the name of Inter University Board (IUB) of India is serving as an inter-university organization with membership around 900 and has been at the forefront with its numerous activities and initiatives to improve higher education system. The endeavour is indeed laudable.

I find that every conference is given a theme to focus and deliberate and the theme for this year is 'Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan' (RUSA). About a month back I had attended a consultative workshop on "Needs assessment and Strategic Planning for Leadership" in RUSA being organized by Tata Institute of Social Sciences in association with Department of Higher Education, Government of Odisha. I find the theme very appropriate as it

will provide wide scope for exchange of views and ideas on this flagship programme of the Government which is designed to transform the higher education system in the country. The conference has on its agenda specific issue of improving access, equity and quality in the field of higher education to be discussed in business sessions to follow over next two days. It would definitely help in making the conference more productive.

Ever since independence we have come up with several measures leading to expansion of educational facilities in the country to an unprecedented scale. Our efforts have spanned all levels of education-primary, secondary and higher. We have witnessed a massive expansion

of school education and thanks to 'Sarva Siksha Abhiyan' and Right to Education Act. Then we have 'Rashtriya Madhyamik

Siksha Abhijan' (RMSA) with the objective to enhance access to secondary education and to improve its quality. Coming to higher education which is a critical sector as it caters to the aspirations of our growing number of youth the Government has launched the scheme 'Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan' on mission mode to improve higher education and achieve the targets of Equity, Quality and Access which are eluding us in our earlier efforts. These efforts made by the Government have surely laid the foundation for building a strong education system, capable of fulfilling our aspirations of becoming a developed country. I believe that conferences like the present one can help us greatly in meeting our goal and objectives through RUSA.

The standard of higher education has a direct relationship with the development of a nation and the quality of life of its citizens. Quality of education in our universities is obviously an area in which our higher education system lags behind. It is quite disheartening that none of the Indian universities finds a place in the top 200 universities in the world and a recent newspaper report states that only 11% of our colleges in the country are in 'A' grade while 71% are in 'B' grade as per the latest assessment by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). If rankings and gradings are any indicator of quality, Indian institutes of higher learning have a long way to go both locally and globally.

It is true that expansion of the higher education system is necessary to cater to the growing demand for higher education. But it is also a fact that expansion without quality improvement serves little purpose. We will have to give more emphasis on quality and already vigorous debate is going on improving quality in the university and our higher education system so as to elevate our universities and colleges to international standard. It becomes incumbent on Indian universities to meet global benchmarks, if India is to do well in the knowledge economy.

In India, we have three broad categories of the higher education institutions, centrally funded institutions, state funded institutions and private institutions. Majority of the students enrolled in state funded

or state controlled private institutions come under the state higher education system. So, any effort for development in this sector must recognize the importance of state higher education institutions and strive to improve their status.

We must develop appropriate vision and planning for the development of institutions and the higher education sector at the state level. Given the complexities of managing the access and equity issues within and amongst states as well as the large number of institutions that already come under the state university system, there is a crying need for cohesive and integrated planning in higher education focusing on the state as the basic unit.

We have seen how several factors have been responsible in reducing universities to an administrative and examination conducting unit rather than an institution focused on promoting teaching, research and faculty development of associated colleges. We must allow room for creativity in teaching, learning, curriculum development and research.

Let me focus on quality faculty. Physical infrastructure is no doubt required but it has to be matched by the quality of human capital. To have this quality of human capital and improve the standards of higher education we need quality teachers who can enhance learning capacity of students and by their own example, they instill good moral values in their students. These teachers must be encouraged to share their wisdom, thoughts and experience with the larger academic community.

Shortage of quality faculty is now felt strongly and it is affecting our system to a great extent. We need to find ways and means of addressing shortage of faculty which affects a substantial part of the Higher Education system. Here I would like to state that RUSA gives enhanced attention to State universities for improving their quality of education and research. It aims not only to create new universities and new colleges by the end of the 13th Plan but also to convert existing colleges to Model Degree Colleges and provide infrastructure grants to State universities and State colleges.

Similarly, the National Knowledge Network of course offers an effective solution to the academic institutions to disseminate ideas, views,

findings and research innovations and at the same time to meet shortages in terms of faculty, infrastructure and resources that deter an institution from offering a great learning experience. I expect our universities to take advantage of this Network.

The institutions must give emphasis on skill enhancement and knowledge gathering by faculty members who have to keep themselves abreast with the latest developments to remain ahead and updated. It is quite distressing to observe that the value structure inherent in the higher education system, especially the universities is fast crumbling. Indiscipline and lawlessness sometimes rule the roost to the detriment of the moral fabric of universities. As you know, values are the spices of life. Adherence to the fundamental values as enshrined in various statutes and guidelines of UGC and Government certainly enhances the quality of higher education. It is quite imperative that the Vice-Chancellors should emphasise upon inculcation of moral values by the faculties, students and staff of the universities so that a conducive atmosphere for learning and research prevails in our universities.

Indisputably, research is an important component of our higher education system. Our institutions of High Education need to focus much more on research. Our institutions of higher learning must enhance their potential for research and promote an environment conducive to creativity and innovation. I think we need more and more collaborative partnerships and better linkage with industry. We also need teachers who would encourage their students to explore beyond the frontiers of the discipline. This will not only encourage meritorious students to do research but also attract talent from foreign universities. I would expect universities to take a lead in this area, which would be a sure way of improving the quality of their research output.

We also need to ensure that the institutions of Higher Education in the country have the requisite autonomy without compromising the requirement of accountability. We also have to project our universities in a more proactive manner. Better rankings will also encourage a greater flow of faculty and students even from abroad.

Our aim is to build a strong and vibrant public higher education system in the 21st century. We have strong responsibility to work together to form a strong system. That is a challenge which all the stakeholders in the higher education system must embrace. RUSA has a complete new approach towards higher education. Its key objectives are to improve access, equity and quality in higher education through planned development. I am sure the deliberations here will touch upon these issues. It is to be ensured that RUSA delivers in a time bound manner.

Vice-Chancellors of different universities gathered here represent a vast pool of talent. As you are heading institutions of higher learning you are accountable; you are expected to deliver service in the most efficient and effective way. As the Chancellor of the universities in Odisha, I have been closely interacting with universities and other academic institutions and academicians and I feel that it is high time that our higher education system delivers the best.

I am sure that in the discussions that follow you will use your ability and expertise to come up with new and innovative ways of raising standards of education and research in our Universities. I once again thank AIU for its endeavours and wish it every success in its future endeavours in the cause of higher education. Let me end by wishing you very productive deliberations. I have no doubt that with your valuable ideas and views we will be able to find new and innovative ways and means of strengthening the higher education system in all its dimensions and even giving it new direction and contribute to the success of RUSA. Success of RUSA will act as a facilitator for the nation's march towards a developed country.

Jai Hind.

2nd Annual Convocation of Shri J.J. Tiberwala University, Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan

It is indeed a matter of great pleasure and privilege for me to address the 2nd Annual Convocation of Shri Jagadishprasad Jhabarmal Tiberwala University. I am thankful for the invitation and congratulate the University management on holding this impressive annual academic ceremony much to the delight of its stakeholders particularly the graduating students. The University has honoured me by conferring this Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters on me. I would like to thank the Chancellor and other members of the University for this gesture and receive the degree with humility and gratitude.

Jagadishprasad Jhabarmal Tiberwala University, set up in this city of Jhunjhunu, the ancient capital of Shekhawati in the quiet and unhurried desert region of north Rajasthan is viewed as an oasis for young men and women to quench their thirst of pursuing different branches of higher education. Though the University is just about five years old having been established in 2009 it has begun its journey brightly and with many promises to keep. Started with undergraduate courses in just four streams of Engineering along with Bachelor and Master's Programme in Business Administration and B.Sc (IT) it now has as many as 24 teaching departments which provide a wide array of academic programmes in Science, Arts, Commerce, Language, Management and Environmental Studies. Besides this, it has also introduced a number of basic as well as job oriented courses. It is heartening to note that this University has made a significant impact on its teaching, and provides students an ideal atmosphere to pursue studies and excel.

Convocation is a great time of celebration for the University, graduates, their families and friends. The University recognizes the hard work, perseverance and dedication of students as it awards them degrees. Academic accomplishments of students make parents, teachers, and friends proud. When the second batch of students are

passing out from this young University and they rejoice over their success and achievements I have great pleasure to share the joy and happiness of this memorable moment and extend my warm felicitations to students, and congratulate the Professors and staff of the University who have been instrumental behind the success of students in one way or the other.

Dear students, you have reached a significant milestone in your life. As you step out of the familiar confines of your alma mater and make your way into an exciting world of myriad challenges and boundless possibilities I am confident that the knowledge and skills you have developed in the University will serve them to do well, create an identity for themselves in this world and make the alma mater proud. I would like you to be constantly motivated and inspired by the eternal words of Swami Vivekananda throughout your journey of life. He said and I quote, "Arise! Awake and Stop not till the goal is reached."

Education is a privilege and shouldn't be thought of as ending on leaving the portals of the institution. It is a lifelong process. I am sure our students will never end their thirst for knowledge and continue the education process for the rest of their life. I would like them to remember that education is the transformational act that takes us from where we were to where we can go.

Education has been recognised as the most important instrument for social, economic and political transformation of a society. A well educated human resource, equipped with the knowledge and appropriate skills is vital for economic and social development. In a diverse society like ours, education acts as an integrative force, imparting values. Today in a fast changing world when scientific and technological development and innovation are bringing a visible transformation in every sphere of human activities, all emphasis is given on education and skill development and very rightly so to meet the demand for high quality and trained human resources to keep going the momentum of progress and growth of

human society. For this, we need to be constantly focused on quality in infrastructure, faculty, curriculum content and research.

Referring to a newspaper report published in a leading English daily just few days back I prefer to quote the report and it says, "If rankings and grading are any indicator of quality, Indian institutes of higher learning have a long way to go both locally and globally." The latest assessment by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) states that only 11% of our colleges are in 'A' grade while 71% are in 'B' grade. This is of course a big challenge for our higher education system. It becomes incumbent on Indian universities to meet global benchmarks, if India is to do well in the knowledge economy.

The need for advanced and quality education has become ever more pressing. Quality of higher education largely depends on quality of teaching and research. It is imperative to have quality faculty who will bring transformation in students and lead them to acquire the right knowledge. Let me quote American scholar and teacher William Arthur who said, "The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires." I urge the teachers to ignite the minds of the young in such a way, that throughout life they have a quest for knowledge and a desire to make this world a harmonious place to live in. Famous Greek philosopher Aristotle had said, "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all."

Research in our universities must be emphasized and promoted to a great extent. Aim of research is to push frontiers of knowledge as well as to evolve technologies and to implement them for development. All efforts should be made so that our research becomes comparable to the best in the world. I am sure this University will encourage students to take keen interest in research activities.

Here, I quote our first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's famous description of the role of a University. He said, "A University stands for humanism, for tolerance, for reason, for the adventure of ideas and for the search of truth. It stands for the onward march of the human race towards ever higher objectives. If the

Universities discharge their duties adequately, then it is well with the nation and the people." Let these words of Pandit Nehru be the guiding principle of this University to glorify its existence in the service of the nation.

Dear Students, you will be building your careers at a period when our country is witnessing significant changes, both economically and socially. Similarly, there is also an amazing pace of developments in various frontiers of science and development and our scientists, engineers and other professionals are scripting country's successes in various fields and nation and the world recognizes their talent and contribution. India boasts of a strong youth population which no other countries have. As young professionals of the country, you should be the torchbearer of the country's growth and provide a technological edge to our country. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore had said, "Reach high, for stars lie hidden in you. Dream deep, for every dream precedes the goal." I wish you all success, happiness and contentment in your professional and personal lives. May your journey of life be illuminated by the light of knowledge, wisdom, and concern for larger society. May the Lord Almighty bless you all.

With these words, I wish this University all success in its endeavours.

Jai Hind.

Golden Jubilee Function of Regional Institute of Education (RIE), Bhubaneswar

It is with immense pleasure that I associate myself with the Golden Jubilee Celebration of Regional Institute of Education (RIE), Bhubaneswar. The celebration of Golden Jubilee of any institution is a great event in the history of that institution. The celebration of Golden Jubilee of Regional Institute of Education is surely of great importance and joy. I express my warm felicitations and greetings on achievement of this important milestone.

It has indeed been a long and enriching journey of 50 years for Regional Institute of Education formerly Regional College of Education. On this momentous occasion, I am reminded of what former British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill once said and I quote "You know you will never get to the end of the journey. But this, so far from discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb".

It is an occasion to remember all those who have contributed to this remarkable journey in one way or the other. It is a function which gives us an opportunity to rejoice and at the same time to reflect on duty and responsibility towards further enhancing the image and reputation built over last 50 years. The reputation is the biggest strength. It has to be maintained at every cost.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) was established by the Government of India in the year 1961 with a view to bringing about qualitative improvement in school education in the country. The RIEs have made a visible impact as Regional Resource Institution for school education and teacher education including educational research. The RIEs, constituent units of NCERT opened at Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Mysore and Shillong contribute to the qualitative improvement of school education through innovative pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes and relevant research, development and extension activities. I am aware that the North-East Regional Institute of Education (NERIE) at Shillong caters to the in-service educational

needs of North-Eastern States. However, the pre-service teacher preparation programmes for the North-East Region are still being taken care by RIE, Bhubaneswar.

I am told that the programme of RIE, Bhubaneswar caters to the needs of Eastern and North East States and also of Andaman & Nicobar Islands in the field of pre-service and in-service teacher training, development of textbooks and research programmes in School Education. It also takes up development and extension activities. It is heartening that RIE, Bhubaneswar is viewed as an institute of repute in the field of teacher education always rising to shoulder responsibility and challenges generated by changes in the educational scenario of the country. It is also a recognised centre of educational research for undertaking doctoral level research. I am happy that a number of research scholars are working for their Ph.D. degrees under the guidance of the Institute faculty in different areas. I am given to understand that the alumni are serving the profession of teaching successfully and made the alma mater proud.

The DM (Demonstration Multipurpose) Schools are an integral part of the RIEs and act as laboratories for trying out innovative practices in school education and teacher education. I am told that the School functioning in this campus has been the ideal ground for teachers and trainees to hone their teaching skill and ability and is also recording impressive academic performance and the success reflects the importance given by teachers here on quality.

You all will agree with me that teachers are the critical guardians of the intellectual life of the nation. They hold in their hands the success of the country and the wellbeing of its citizens. They have the onerous duty of ensuring that the children under their control realize their full potential. I am happy that students pursuing different courses here have shown great interest to join the teaching profession which is always regarded as a noble one because of its significant influence on the lives of children who are the future citizens of the country. Teaching is viewed as among the most respected professions in terms of its contribution to society. Given the high regard for the

teaching profession, it is crucial for teachers and also those coming to this profession to have right attributes and values. Good training and support can help one to become excellent at teaching. I am pleased that the RIE, as a constituent unit of NCERT continuously reviews and revises its teacher education programmes to ensure that quality teachers are produced who are well-prepared for teaching in the 21st century. I must compliment the RIE, Bhubaneswar for effectively utilizing its resources to develop a viable infrastructure and human resources base and applaud the contributions of everyone involved in the venture.

While we bask in the glory of the past when we celebrate the fifty years of existence of this institution, it is also the time and opportunity for us to introspect and analyse and what could have been done better on its way to progress.

The world today is profoundly different from the world 50 years ago. Today we are a global village, owing to instant communications and revolution in information technology. Technological developments have fundamentally transformed every field and it includes education also.

Education is a dynamic field. Almost every day researchers are coming up with new insights into the learning pattern of the children. Theories and techniques that were considered relevant till a few decades ago have either to be replaced or modified for current times. Children today are more aware of the changing world and tech savvy. It is imperative for teachers to constantly upgrade their understanding of children's interests and advances in pedagogy to stay relevant and effective in the classroom. They need to reinvent themselves to be in sync with the reality of this change and trends emerging out of research. It is very much expected that trained and skilled teachers are informed about all the latest developments. The need for pre-service and in-service training therefore is important and abiding.

We now live in an age of knowledge. Knowledge changes very fast and the rate of change will further accelerate in future. This self propelling technological progress, unlike fifty years ago, is altering the

essential daily tools we need in our work life. And yet in the face of all this evidence, we have relied almost entirely on passive learning. Students listened to lectures or they read and then were evaluated on the basis of their ability to demonstrate the mastery of the content of a definite study. They weren't asked to actively use the knowledge they had acquired. But this is now changing as we push forward with the digital transformation of education. It is worth taking a look at just how greatly technology can impact teaching and learning — and what is at stake, not just for our students but for our society as a whole. Thus we need to be predicting the impact of technology on learning and hence we need to build learning tools and modify education system accordingly. It has been well said by noted English writer Douglas Adams, best known as the author of 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy' and I quote, "the best way to predict the future is to build it" and this is exactly what we should be doing.

So it is important to look to the future and find out what skills will be important in a few years from now, when today's kids enter the education arena and the work force. Education, as we all recognize, will then be more about how to process and use information and less about imparting it. This is a consequence of the proliferation of knowledge.

New technologies will profoundly alter the way knowledge is conveyed. Bringing technology into the classroom will help students to quench their thirst for connections between what they are learning in the classroom and what they see happening in the real world and keep them interested in what they are learning. It will help teachers to assess where the students are strong and where they are weak and also enable to interact more meaningfully with their students making the classroom truly smarter.

An ideal teacher needs to keep abreast of the new knowledge and technology that is being developed and should possess the ability to be a lifelong learner. This factor is driving curriculum changes that require students to acquire multi-disciplinary skill sets. The general perception amongst most parents about the quality of the present day

school education is that while the content may have been enlarged, the quality has declined. However, it seems that their concept of education has remained static as the level of competition today is not at local but at global level.

I thus feel that in the years to come, schools generally should not only be institutions of learning, but must also provide an individualized environment where a student learns. the simple techniques of goal setting, planning, dealing with difficult situations in life. So, in the present day contexts it is not enough for teachers to merely give information and knowledge to students. But more than information and knowledge, one needs wisdom. They need character building. In the imparting of values, teachers play a major pivotal role. Hence, our emphasis is not only on expansion of and providing access to the educational system of all those who seek to study but more importantly also on improving the knowledge base and quality of our teachers. Let us not forget that good teachers are costly but bad teachers cost the nation even much more. When I meet young people who want to make a difference, change a life and leave behind a living, breathing legacy, I urge them to teach.

I learn that RIE, Bhubaneswar's performance over the first 50 years has been commendable. We all look forward to RIE, Bhubaneswar's larger contributions in nurturing our young men and women to be outstanding in the profession. I would like it to strive further hard and achieve even more while upholding its reputation. In conclusion, I wish all our students and scholars to come out with flying colours and have a meaningful and satisfying career in the teaching profession.

Jai Hind.

Conferment Ceremony of Honoris Causa by Hanseo University at Seosan-Si in South Korea

Let me begin by extending you all warm greetings and good wishes from the people of Odisha and India, my Government and from my own self. I thank the President and Founder of Hanseo University and others in the University for kind invitation to this special ceremony. I am indeed proud and privileged to be in the beautiful campus of Hanseo University which has been a connecting bridge between two countries and more precisely between South Korea and Odisha.

I would like to express my appreciation to the University for the honour bestowed on me today. The citation just read out explained that the conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Letters, Honoris Causa, to me was on account of my achievement as someone who has spent decades in political life and contributed to public life, governance and democracy in India. While I am humbled by this honour, this recognition, in my view, is for my motherland and for the people of India.

India and South Korea, far apart by geographical borders have ties of history and culture since long that provide a very good foundation to fostering warm and friendly relations. Many of us in India know of the legendary Princess from Ayodhya in India, who travelled to Korea to marry King, Kim Suro. The cultural affinities that we share underline by age-old traditions and the philosophy of Lord Buddha. Buddhism provides an enduring link between our societies. India has played an important role in promotion and propagation of Buddhism, and Odisha has been a land where several monasteries are still lying as mute witnesses to a flourishing Buddhist era. It is said that Buddhism made its way from India to Korea in the fourth century, flowering in the Goryeo period from the 10th to 14th centuries when it enjoyed state support. The arrival of Buddhism in Korea led to the fundamental transformation of local society and a blossoming of

Korean civilization. The 13th century 'Tripitaka Koreana', today one of Korea's national treasures, is a translation from Sanskrit of the Buddhist canon and includes some rare surviving descriptions of classical Indian culture. Truly, India is regarded as their spiritual home by the Buddhists in Korea.

India's Nobel Prize winning Poet Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's description of Korea's glorious and bright future as the 'Lamp of the East' in his short but evocative poem in 1929 is an abiding bond between us. We, in India truly admire the honor given by the Government with the installation of a bust of Gurudev Tagore, at a public location in the city of Seoul.

There is natural empathy between our two countries, as both suffered the pain caused by colonialism and tragic partitions. India was present at the dawn of Korean independence, and in fact Indian representatives oversaw the first democratic elections in this country in 1948. Our Medical Unit and Field Ambulances offered medical care and succour, to both sides during the Korean War. Building on that empathy both countries now share a healthy relationship and values of democracy, rule of law and respect for human dignity, which binds people of two countries together and at the same time makes it easy to work together and cooperate in almost all areas of human endeavor.

Of course India's growing emphasis on its 'Look East Policy' and South Korea's 'New Asia Diplomatic Initiative' has helped elevate the relationship to one of 'strategic partnership.' I am well aware that India and South Korea enjoy a very successful bilateral relationship since 1973. It is a relationship which today encompasses collaboration and cooperation in diverse fields - political, economic, scientific and cultural. Our bilateral trade grew significantly and is continuing with the same trajectory. South Korean companies have become household names in India, and some of our best business houses are also investing in this country.

South Korea is an advanced country with applied science and state-of-the-art technology. The South Korean IT sector is renowned internationally for its leading global position along with electronics,

heavy machinery, chemical, shipbuilding, and automobile sectors. Given South Korea's leading position in these sectors, it can be concluded that South Korea provides the perfect breeding ground for high-tech and creative fields.

I am happy that the Indian diaspora comprising of businessmen, IT professionals, scientists, researchers and students has made themselves a vibrant community with their energy, dynamism, entrepreneurship and skills in this country. They have contributed profoundly towards strengthening ties of friendship, goodwill and mutual understanding between people of India and South Korea. After all, relations between countries are built and nurtured by the people on both sides. I thank the Government, Universities, employers and people of South Korea, who have extended their hand of co-operation and friendship to our diaspora here. This link with the people is a great asset in the building of closer bilateral relations between our two countries.

India-South Korea bilateral relationship is a remarkable example of how trade is the primary driver in global relationships. Ideology, which marked international relations in the previous decades, has given way to trade - which now is the international marker for relations.

India has a fastest growing economy in the world. India's growth story is not only a reflection of the new dynamism of a young India, but it is also a reaffirmation that the values of democracy, pluralism and the rule of law can sustain high economic growth. Further, the economic transformation in India, not only augurs a better future for its one billion plus people; it has also helped India become an anchor of stability and a hub of opportunity for the global economy. It is, therefore, not surprising that India has been projected among the most attractive destinations for Foreign Direct Investment.

India has launched a massive national programme for skill development where it aims at training 500 million skilled personnel by 2022. I wish South Korea to be India's partner in this mission. The Vocational Education and Training Initiative between our two

countries should be promoted for capacity building efforts in India. The past experience leaves no doubt that closer ties between our two countries will be a win-win partnership.

There is tremendous potential to expand the Indo-South Korea bilateral partnership. We will work towards maintaining and enhancing these trends. I am confident that our Governments will expand their sphere of cooperation and explore new opportunities in the coming days renewing the strong partnership for each other's progress and development. The sky, literally, is the only limit to collaboration and partnership between India and South Korea.

Just now I was referring to education and the partnership with South Korea. I understand that South Korea has a distinct record in academic achievements as well as research in Asia and the world as well. Based on such education competitiveness, it is ideally positioned to offer a higher level of education to the students coming from abroad.

Today I am happy to be in Hanseo University and when I am in a University, an institution of higher learning I am instantly reminded of the words of India's first Prime Minister late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who described what should be the guiding principle of a university in these fine words and I quote, "The University stands for humanism and tolerance, for reason, for adventure of ideas and for the search of truth. It stands for the forward march of the human race towards even higher objectives. If the universities discharge their duties adequately then it is well with the nation and the people."

It is heartening to note that Hanseo University has stood as a beacon of learning for over last two decades since its establishment in 1992. The University has been a source of South Korea's advancement. And together, it represents the harmony between tradition and progress. The University, apart from catering to needs of modern higher education for a large number of students including students from abroad, has a strong social foresight that enables students to remain rooted to the cause of society even as they scale new heights in terms of higher learning. I am told that South Korea has adopted an enthusiastic educational programme to attract and increase the number

of their foreign students. Besides substantial support, there is also advantage in form of scholarship programmes for foreign students, allowing them to come and study here without much economic distress.

I understand that Hanseo University has already tied up with many universities and this will certainly help in enhancing the quality of education and research. I am particularly interested in Hanseo University forging partnership with more number of universities in Odisha so that our students are able to know and explore the opportunities available and are able to give wings to their dreams. Same is with the students of Hanseo University to avail career prospects in India which is a nation with a fast growing economy. Therefore, we need to expand student exchange programmes and increase scholarships. At the same time, we should encourage more youth to study in each other's countries. It will surely deliver positive results. I am aware of numerous advantages of student exchange programmes. It is heartening that as part of one such programme with KIIT and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) in Odisha since 2009 that provides primary to college level education freely to poor tribal children, the students of this University have visited the campuses and left distinct stamp of love and cordiality in the minds of tribal students in KISS with their interaction and very good tips in several areas of their interest. I had the pleasure to meet and interact with the University volunteers in Raj Bhavan, Bhubaneswar. The spirit and enthusiasm I had seen in them is quite commendable.

We, the Indians have a great heritage like South Korea. We had great Universities and centres of learning that attracted scholars from many parts of the world. We have our time tested value system. We have overcome struggles and hurdles and grown in strength to be a vibrant democracy today. Our democratic model of governance aims to provide opportunity for the development of every individual. We have an unparalleled demographic advantage with the largest youth force. Indian youth have demonstrated their talent and capabilities both in technological as well as in economic terms, in India as well as in

countries abroad. We have given much emphasis on expanding our education sector as it is the key ingredient in socio-economic transformation and development. The effort is to empower our huge human capital with education and transform it to be a vibrant force to propel inclusive growth of the nation. Higher education holds key to give the nation a large pool of skilled manpower. So, improvement in the standards of higher education has become necessary.

The growth of higher education in India has been phenomenal. Today India is having one of the largest systems of higher education in the world. Both public and private institutions operate simultaneously. In Odisha, we have also both government run universities and private universities. A critical responsibility I have as the Chancellor of eleven public universities is to leverage and prudently invest the resources as we seek to pursue our basic missions of teaching, research and public service. I look forward to my visit to this University with much hope and the interaction will surely help us to unravel new areas of cooperation and collaborations towards advancement of knowledge.

We live in exciting times and a fast changing world. Globalization and technology continue to remake economies and transform work at an increasing pace. We are not going to be successful simply waiting for change. We must drive fundamental changes to our structure so that higher education meets the onerous challenges of the fast-changing world. We need to establish new traditions and create new paths for our students.

The present global trends reflect that it is the power of knowledge that will dominate in the years to come. Universities are the providers and facilitators of higher forums of knowledge. To keep pace with the fast changing scenario we have to ensure that a spirit of knowledge and learning is cultivated in different spheres and particularly among the young generation. In an information dominant society and inter connected world, the comparative advantage of universities lies in their identity as custodians and managers of knowledge-based networks that give them a global mandate and reach.

While future holds great potential it is required to meet the challenge of providing quality education to all. Our youth force when provided with opportunities for constructive engagement will not only fulfill their aspirations but also they become a powerful engine of growth and development. Our focus and effort must be to bring technologies to handle the twin challenge of rapidly enhancing the quality and improving the access to quality education. Secondly, we need to create and nurture a holistic learning environment that enables structured and curiosity driven learning as well as problem solving abilities and skills through participative experience. Thirdly, we have to nurture research in higher education to push frontiers of knowledge. I am aware that a lot of ground work needs to be done to realize these objectives. We would need to adopt several bold measures.

Modern day universities are complex organizations operating in challenging and constantly evolving environment. Every University has to be more than the producer of mere degree holders. Universities and more particularly the faculty have to take up the challenge to produce qualified and trained individuals who can confidently engage themselves with the real life world and make an impact through their innovative capabilities and who are sensitive towards the needs of the society and are aware of their rights, duties and responsibilities as educated citizens. This task is crucially important to the future of India and also the future of South Korea and all of us connected with education have a special role and responsibility in shaping that future.

Youth are the future of a nation and the world. The potential of the youth should be recognized to bring about positive change not only to itself, but also to the world. In India as well as in South Korea, the youth comprises significant proportion of the population. This demographic dividend has contributed immensely to the efforts that our countries are putting, towards achieving developmental aspirations. I am of the view, that the more that we do towards channelizing the energy of our youth, the faster would be our growth. Dear students, I wish all of you well in your respective further pursuits. I am certain you would rise progressively in your respective careers. I do hope that

as you rise, you will retain in you a spirit of trusteeship and contribute substantially to the society around, the institutions that shaped you, the nation and the world at large. With these words, I once again express my happiness to be in your midst today. I wish the students and faculty all the very best and also wish Hanseo University to scale new heights in days ahead upholding its reputation.

Jai Hind.

19th Convocation of Berhampur University

I am indeed delighted to be presiding over the Convocation of yet another leading University of the state, Berhampur University. Delighted because a Convocation gives me a golden opportunity to share some of my thoughts and views on higher education in a unique forum where almost all stake holders are present: students, teachers, academicians, researchers, some policy makers both past and present and outstanding members of civil society; or else, where does one find such an exceptional congregation where the brightest of brains are present?

I take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to our Chief Guest today, Prof. Furqan Qamar who has been an outstanding academician and over the years, his contribution to higher education sector has been appreciated by one and all. His has been a multifaceted personality; and the presence of such a luminary has added to the lustre of this function.

Honouring eminent personalities with the Degree of Honoris Causa has been a noble tradition. Today two well-known sons of the soil received it. One has been a fighter throughout his life and fought for the cause of the poor and the other has been an internationally acclaimed artist. Both Shri Panda and Shri Pathy have been true ambassadors, albeit drastically different in their mission! If Shri Panda has been an ambassador of social justice, Shri Pathy has truly been a cultural ambassador. Drawing inspiration from these two, I sincerely hope students will strive hard to achieve excellence in their respective fields.

Dear students, as Chancellor of your University, I think I am in a position to advise you and through my advice, I would like to touch upon a few relevant subjects and issues, while remaining fully aware in my heart that your generation seems always to be in a sort of haste. Incredible scientific advancement has been responsible for such haste which is a welcome deviation from the past, or more specifically from our time!

In fact, though in a lighter venin, I would tell you the difference. You live in a time where almost everything you do, you do it by the press of a button and we lived in a time when a full shirt was a dream for many

and a radio set was a luxury! Now, you see the difference. This is also indicative of another reality that I have seen: the different stages through which this great nation has made her arduous journey. In my own humble and small way I have both been a witness and contributor to India's evolution and growth. I have seen an India where people died in thousands due to epidemics and I am seeing another India where a proud nation is dictating her own terms and conditions in a global affairs! In the mean time, I have been a witness to massive transformations in almost every sphere; you name the area and India is already there, either matching with international level or catching up very fast; be it medicine or fertilizer production, be it self-sufficiency in food or dairy products or developing quality human resource. So here I am making these observations after seeing four generations: the generation that was led by Mahatma Gandhi, after India's Independence by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, then the generation that was bent upon social justice and equal distribution through a series of legislations having all-encompassing socio-economic implications, the third generation buoyed by the opportunities created by a liberal economic structure and the fourth, or for that matter, the present generation which, equipped with unlimited flow of information and constant upgradation of knowledge, is in a hurry to achieve everything. This, I would say, is a good sign, for it characterizes the youth. However, if this desire to achieve is focused on achievement on personal front, then I would say the youth is on the wrong track, but if it is fired by the desire of doing good to others, then I would say those belonging to my generation would have a sigh of relief. I say this with great conviction because when one India is proud of her industrial, scientific and knowledge revolution, there is another India that is struggling desperately to come out of some of the very condemnable of problems, like child labour, malnutrition, illiteracy, regionalism, violence against women etc. Added to that are the problems faced by the nation as a whole caused due to natural calamities of unprecedented scale, be it Tsunami or cyclone or earthquake or flood. The big question here is: can one India that competes with New York, London, Paris or Beijing leave another India behind that is stuck up in time gone by?

This, in fact, has been a conundrum for the political elite as well as plan and policy makers. Why, despite thousands of crores of rupees spent for the purpose, does India suffer from the maladies that haunt our society as a whole? The answer to this might have eluded those sitting in mega cities and chalking out hundreds of plans for the emancipation of the millions living in slums, remote inaccessible villages and tribal areas. However, one thing has been proved beyond any doubt: spending crores of rupees, creating new schools and colleges and universities, setting up big plants, pumping money into health and agriculture sector etc. May be growth indicators, but all these cannot guarantee us peace, love, concern, compassion, happiness and tolerance! This is where something has gone wrong somewhere. Do I sound a bit like despising the growth indicators? No, that is far from the truth. In fact, when I had first landed in America in 1962, I was amazed at the massive progress the country had made on all fronts and my only dream at that moment was when would I see my country evolving into such a developed country? Today, I am really happy and proud that my nation is on the even keel not only with America, but also with many other advanced nations! On the other hand, I am saddened by the degeneration of human values and ethics. Are we humans –as a race living in an era of unprecedented material growth – not capable of responding to the needs of the others? Are we, while sending humans to other planets, not capable of reaching our neighbours in distress? Yes – only humans are capable of doing that. If one hand can carry a laptop or a very modern mobile set, the other hand can very well carry a bunch of flowers – flowers of love, tolerance, care and compassion. Then only we would be proud as a race, as a nation and as an individual.

This is where the role of our academic institutions and our teachers is vital in creating a human resource that is rich on both components. Extensive research that culminates in creation of new knowledge which in turn translates into growth and progress on every front beginning from infrastructure to industry, science to health, energy to agriculture and information technology to environment protection! Then again, the same institutions and teachers should evolve a mechanism

where students also embark on a journey of self analysis and introspection and are capable of fostering and nurturing values; values which the human civilization through the ages have stood for! Our education system should come up with a concrete plan for this, but it is you – my dear students, who as individual agents of research and knowledge in particular and society in general should strive to uphold the spirit of integrity, character, conviction and compassion in you and the rest will fall into place.

Dear students, all of you are aware that you are being in a world of stiff competition. Competition in every field and every stage has characterized modern times. Competition is good because it propels human growth and it is bad when it builds its edifice on the dictum "survival of the fittest" and leaves the weak and helpless amongst us by the roadside. As a person who, as I said earlier, has seen the metamorphosis of this nation from a sleepy laid back one into a fast vibrant one, my advice to you all would be based on a very simple principle: grow and let others grow, rise and let others rise and, compete and let others compete on a fair field. My generation was much different, in the sense that leaders were always in a mood to seek for opportunity to spot talent and help them grow and allow them the space to hug limelight! That was how I grew as a person, as a politician, as a Parliamentarian and above all, as a human being. Many elders and great leaders beginning right from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru have allowed me to grow; not only allowed but almost forced me to showcase my creativity and talent. I think that should be the spirit of you all. Not allowing another talent to grow or for that matter, suppressing creativity for the growth of self is perhaps the crudest from of selfishness. When I began my address, I said about my observance of four generations and this has been a great cultural as well as social shift that has marked our behaviour. People of the first generation fostered and nurtured creativity, but today's stiff competition encourages the concept "First I, never others!" There is in fact no wrong in "First I", but it should be, "First I, and with me others like me!" Here, let me quote what Swami Vivekananda had said long ago, "The greatest religion is to be true to your own nature. Have faith in yourselves. You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you? There is no other

teacher but your own soul. The great secret of true success, of true happiness is this: the man or woman who asks for no return, the perfectly unselfish person, is the most successful. They alone live, who live for others".

This perhaps is the mantra that should define the course of your journey of life. This should determine what role you would play while making the great leap into the ocean of life. As little angles before me, with your smiling and confident faces, you are perhaps destined to bring about change. You are perhaps destined to bridge the glaring gap between material growth and what Swami Vivekananda said "grow from inside out!" And believe me my young friends! I would be perhaps the happiest man to see the fifth generation to be a generation of angels – of course of a different sort, an individual who conducts business conferences from a small tablet, yet whose eyes and ears are sensitive to the plight of others.

With these words, I bless you to be transformed from a young man into a wise, innovative, smart, competitive and compassionate adult. As I utter the word 'smart', I am reminded of an anecdote that involved two great men who were instrumental in shaping the destiny of this great nation. I think this anecdote will reveal much which thousands of words cannot express. Soon after Independence, one foreign journalist asked Lord Mountbatten as to who was the smartest man on earth at that time! Considering the fact that Lord Mountbatten had wide contact with international personalities, the questioner had hoped for something else. Yet the reply was instant, sincere and emphatic. "Why any doubt?" Lord Mountbatten had said. "There is only one smart man on this planet and he is Gandhi!"

That, in essence, sums up what should guide you and what should form the edifice of your future.

Jai Hind.

6th Convocation of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT), Burla

I am delighted to preside over the Sixth Convocation ceremony of the Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT), Burla and address young men and women graduating from the University today. At the outset, I pay my homage to Veer Surendra Sai, an illustrious son of the soil and stalwart of country's freedom struggle in Odisha on whose honour this technical University is named after. His bold and daring ventures against the British Rule, patriotism, courage and sacrifice find few parallel. I am sure the legacy of this great freedom fighter will always serve as an inspiration to our graduating students in their individual as well as professional life and instill in them love for motherland above anything else.

As you may be aware, the VSSUT, came into being in 2009 owes its existence to University College of Engineering, the premier engineering institute of Odisha that enjoyed an enviable reputation for academic excellence and gave a new vision to engineering education in the state and produced many brilliant students over the years who are known for their skill and professional competence. It is heartening that the University standing on this grand legacy is committed to uphold its core values, ethics, identity and reputation.

It is my pleasure to extend a very hearty welcome to our Chief Guest Prof. R. Natarajan, the renowned Technologist and Academician of the country to the august occasion of the University's sixth convocation. Prof. Natarajan has a long experience and vast outlook having served in several key posts and I am sure his address today will surely enlighten our faculty members as well as students on where we stand and what is the task before us and our goal to achieve.

It is once again a great feeling to be amidst young students of technology, the future of India. Today is another milestone day in the history of VSSUT, Burla. And we joyously celebrate this important milestone in the academic journey of our graduating students in the company of their family, friends, and teachers. I congratulate all the

graduating students on this occasion and also to the awardees and medal winners for their excellent academic achievement. I convey my warm greetings to all family members of the graduates and awardees present here. I also convey my warm greetings to the entire faculty fraternity of VSSUT.

Let me tell the graduating students that the present time is an opportune time to put India to the next higher pedestal in every front. I am sure the education and learning at the University will serve them well in their professional and personal endeavours. Success has no guaranteed magic formula but one can seek to glean some major contributory factors. They have several examples who walked into unexplored path and strove to be unique and are remembered for their contribution to the human kind. I would like to advice our students to remember the words of Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of Telephone who said and I quote, "Don't keep forever on the public road, going only where others have gone. Leave the beaten track occasionally and dive into the woods. You will be certain to find something you have never seen before. It will be a little thing, but do not ignore it. Follow it up, explore all around it; one discovery will lead to another, and before you know it, you will have something worth thinking about." I look at the next generation of engineers and technologists to architect India's development and progress in the 21st century.

While we celebrate the competency and the success of India's scientific manpower who hold their own in the world scientific community our minds go to our first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru whose educational and scientific policies made possible such an achievement. Because of these policies top-notch scientific educational and research institutions that Nehru promoted like the IITs, CSIR, ICAR, have come up in the country. The importance of these institutions in creating professionals, furthering research and pulling the wheels of development of the country is immense. I have worked with Nehruji as his Parliamentary Secretary and for Nehruji, science and technology had multiple functions to perform: not only as an instrument to solve the economic problems of a developing society like

ours, but also to make India a strong and self-reliant country. Let me quote him and he said, "It is science alone that can solve the problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening custom and tradition, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by starving people. . . . Who indeed could afford to ignore science today? At every turn we have to seek its aid."

Today India is recognised by the world for her capability in successful application of technology. We have done wonders and our accomplishments tell everything. We take pride in having a number of iconic engineers and technocrats, who have demonstrated that a world class engineering marvel can be created without any foreign expertise and only through innovation and dedication. Significantly, many critical technologies have been built and are still built indigenously with available technology base. We are working to improve agricultural production, connectivity and enhance our business environment. Our scientists and technocrats are doing their best in making India as a fast growing country. Our focus and thrust is on harnessing technology to become a developed nation. But smaller countries like Singapore, Korea are moving ahead developing innovative solutions and setting new standards for us. So we need to study their rise and develop our own to improve India and to improve our peoples' lives. But truly, improving India is a journey without end.

India views engineering and technology as a route to become a prosperous and developed nation removing poverty, subsistence agriculture and inadequate health care. It made technology as a way of creating prosperity for thousands of workers and establishing itself at the front rank of global innovation. However, there are technological challenges we need to overcome. We have to work together to build a more vibrant and sustainable India with a comprehensive plan and a roadmap for the future.

The first of the several technological challenges of the twenty-first century is health care. As we grow more prosperous, the ability to extend and preserve life will become available to billions more. We face a world where the demand for health care increases even faster

than our population. This also brings in the factor of huge costs and pressure on scarce resources. This makes us to focus on providing effective access to high quality healthcare to patients everywhere even in remote areas. As hospitals go "digital" and doctors share their expertise with colleagues around the world, computer scientists will need to support the fast, accurate transmission of complex, life saving data. So the importance of transforming healthcare through applied multi-disciplinary technology like incorporating leading edge digital technology and engineering expertise is the need of the hour.

Another big challenge I wish to talk about are the twin issues of climate change and increased demand for energy. We face pressure on natural resources like oil and coal at the same time as populations demand ever higher standards of living. We know that we will need more energy to ensure our economies grow. We also know that the energy we produce now has an unacceptable impact on the environment. That challenge creates a dual role for our scientists as well as technologists. First we need to develop ways of maximising energy efficiency. Second, we need to find new and alternative and renewable sources of energy. I believe that through innovation we will catalyze a real and meaningful momentum for change.

Coming to the issue of climate crisis it threatens to change the very structure of the world around us. Now, we need to harness technology to tackle the greatest challenge of all our lives: our response to man-made climate change. We look to our technologists to highlight the role of information and communications technology in tackling climate change. We must be committed to creating a more sustainable world through information and communications technology.

Our fight against poverty, infant and maternal mortality continues undiminished. It is not just a lack of money that keeps people afflicted. Other realities like ignorance, lack of access to health care become crucial. There are challenges which have profound consequences for the country and the economy.

Unarguably technology has changed the way people do business, travel, communicate and even socialise. Because of this, we integrate technology into everything we do. It is a huge responsibility for scientists and technologists to find solutions that the country desperately needs. To resolve these challenges and ensure improving quality of life, science and technology supported solutions are required.

Our scientists, engineers and technologists have an obligation to explore the power of technology and even create new technology to strike at some of our most vexing economic, educational, health and other social problems. To do so, we must prepare for the communications revolution that is upon us, opening the doors of learning and opportunity for everyone.

Our goal is to improve governance and inclusive growth with new and indigenous technology. We must search ways to promote good governance by harnessing information and communication technology. These tools are seen as cost effective and efficient ways of soliciting the inputs of large numbers of people. We have begun adopting such technology to achieve desired development and social inclusion goals but we need to accelerate and ensure easy access. Internet, arguably is the greatest factor of change in modern times.

Today, the fundamental question is whether we share the fruits of communications revolution with everyone, or only a privileged few. The answer depends on the decisions we make and the actions we take from this moment on. It is for our scientists, engineers and technology professionals to ensure this generation to experience higher quality of life that derives from an interactive sharing of information and knowledge. If we make that leap. and help every citizen having access to the Internet and the chance to learn the skills to apply these new technologies for personal advancement as well as the common good, India will make a successful transition in the 21st century. If we fail, we may leave a legacy smaller than our own inheritance.

I also contend, however, that if we make the right choices now, we can substantially change for the better. To succeed at our task

requires a concerted and coordinated effort — a partnership among scientists and technologists.

We must realize that this change is not about one more technological advance, as the typewriter was in its day, but about how we relate to each other, establishing ties to people we may never, in fact, meet; how we make ourselves heard without going through the usual channels; how we champion a cause; how we come together and how we empower our youth to lead the way.

This is a huge, unprecedented opportunity. Challenges can act as an inspiration to scientists and technologists to work together to deal with the issues facing the nation.

I am mindful that technology itself is never the reason for which things change. Rather, it is how people choose to apply technology and whether they make wise decisions and address real needs that make the difference in the long run. It is the success or failure of the scientific and technological response to the challenges that will define the course of human events over the next generation. It is up to you, and to the whole scientific community - researchers, technologists and scientists in the country that we succeed in our efforts in the development of tools to take India forward.

India, in Nehruji's vision, could become a great country if the people adopted a scientific temper. This scientific temper has to be an essential component of the socialization of our populace and needs to be promoted as an integral approach to nation-building. We must improve our villages and cities and give our people a high quality environment to live, work and play. If that succeeds, then there can be no greater tribute to our first Prime Minister. I see the importance of preparing our young people for the future. Our universities are planting seeds of opportunity in the fertile ground where our young men and women are tilling. They must enable young minds to take part in creating new technologies and making it beneficial for the society and the nation.

Dear students, you are young, knowledgeable and energetic. I am confident that you have a joyful learning in this university. Now

a totally different world awaits you as you step out of your university. This world is exciting full of opportunities, yet it has its set of challenges and responsibilities. The initial years may be a period of stress and difficult but your knowledge and confidence that you built in this university will help you to take the challenges head on. Make yourself an asset to the organization you work for. Do remember this talisman in life that when you dream, keep your head in air and feet on ground. Perseverance is the key to success; there is no short cut for big goals and no substitute for hard work. Similarly, efforts may fail but individual always emerges victorious with new learning in every failure.

On this special occasion, I once again congratulate all the graduating students and the entire VSSUT fraternity. I wish you all success, happiness and contentment in your professional and personal lives. May your journey through life be illuminated by the light of knowledge, wisdom, your actions and concern for society. May the Lord Almighty bless you all.

Jai Hind.

2nd Convocation Ceremony of Centurion University of Technology and Management

I am delighted to preside over the second Convocation Ceremony of Centurion University of Technology and Management today among the graduating students, faculties and the invitees in this beautiful campus.

It is a matter of happiness that the pioneer of the Green Revolution in India, Prof. M. S. Swaminathan is with us today. Prof. Swaminathan is an institution who has changed the lives of Indian farmers through his emphasis on sustainable agriculture with the use of biotechnology. His emphasis on and evolution of environment friendly technology has surely given a new direction to Indian agriculture. I am happy that such an intellectual stalwart of the country is here on this august occasion and his enlightening address would surely fill in our students and faculty members the much needed vigour and inspiration to excel in individual life and also as professionals and dedicate themselves to the cause of the nation.

Convocation ceremony is an important event of the university which acknowledges the achievements of the new graduates. At convocation ceremonies, I always remind the graduating students that they are very fortunate to be where they are at that joyous moment, and that they should thank their teachers, friends and especially, their family who have been an unending source of support. They should keep themselves well grounded and they have to constantly remind themselves that they should try to utilise their full potential for the well being of the society which has enormously contributed for their success.

A university convocation reminds us to acknowledge joyously the significant work of the teachers who have laboured hard to create a special intellectual, environment and to enable our students to succeed. Teachers have been a constant source of inspiration in every one's life. Technology offers tremendous potentials but it will never be able to replace the teachers. Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhiji was always

of the opinion that the teachers should always use all resources to be creative in efforts and become role models for their students. Our teachers should help our students to become learned, skilled and above all more humane. It is appropriate to quote Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's description of real purpose of education and I quote, "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence".

As the graduating students are poised to embark upon a new journey to enter into the next phase of their life I urge upon them to be efficient and committed to the chosen profession. They must always remember the adage that success has no guaranteed magic formula but one can always pick up some major contributory factors to success. I join the University to wish them all the very best in their future pursuits.

In a world where myriad forces push society towards multifold stratification, higher education must always provide adequate opportunity. Recent efforts aimed at opening our campuses to students from a wider range of backgrounds must be encouraged. It is obvious that in a globalised domain there can not be any closed-door policy. The effort of this University in providing international exposure to its students is praiseworthy as it reaffirms its existence and growth through a network of quality educational institutions and social entrepreneurial outreach. It aims at delivering primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational education and training in a number of disciplines.

And while we properly applaud any success in attracting students, faculty, and staff, we need to know that there is a long way to go before our institutions can be considered truly inclusive. The budding youth of this country deserve to be at an institution that is sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the times.

Our missions differ in many ways, but the global scenario is linked by a common thread. It mandates the colleges and universities that they promote the public good through providing opportunity,

fostering global development, increasing awareness, and in being efficient in use of resources for the well-being of mankind.

Centurion University needs to get focused on providing excellent education for students, both inside the classroom, and on the playing fields. It must justifiably celebrate scientific achievements as well as achievements in other fields. In this place of learning, we rejoice in the range and excellence of our educational programmes. In all the pursuits, the faculty should always get united in the core values of deep intellectual curiosity, commitment to excellence in teaching and research and most of all, influencing integrity. But at the same time the University must be careful to hold itself accountable in its progress towards meeting the objectives.

We must very well know that we can lead only when we create world class institutions. Colleges and universities produce leaders to take the nation forward. World class institutes are found producing professional leaders with higher imagination. They become pace setters and driving force to take the nation to new height in every respect. We should try to introspect at this hour. It is now not enough to produce just engineers, professionals and technologists who become technology followers. It is essential to produce world class engineers, professionals and technologists to deal with the known and unknown challenges of the future and become leaders and pioneers in technology. After all, world class institutes will decide India's future. India desperately needs them for it is aspiring to be a developed nation. Our global rankings have left much to be desired. We must strive hard to build an academic culture favourable for innovation and technology transfer in our colleges and universities.

Here, I would like to share some thoughts on the brave new world of technology. As a nation, we have an obligation to use technology and manage our resources properly. A quotation recently caught my eye that reads like this: "If modern technology fulfills its promise, we are on the threshold of a revolution." These words are wise and visionary.

Most of all, we must realize that the change taking place across the globe because of communications revolution is not about one more technological advance, as the typewriter was in its day, but about how we relate to each other, establishing link to people we may never, in fact, meet; how we make ourselves heard without going through the usual channels; how we champion a cause; how we come together once more as communities; how we empower our youth to lead the way. To do so, we must prepare for the communications revolution that is upon us, opening the doors of learning and opportunity for our youth and for ourselves.

Our mission, in the digital age, is to use the new technologies to make sure that it connects to the aspirations of the people. It is true that one can't make available thousands of specialists either in education or health care in the remotest corners of the country, but one can make use of their services through broadband at multi-service centres in every village. E-medical facilities will ensure specialist services on a dial. A patient at the health center in a village can be connected to any medical specialist hundreds of miles away and diagnosed online. We obviously can't ensure proper quality of education everywhere, but we can provide world class education to children through massive online open courses. Despite making right to education a fundamental right, we still struggle to fill our schools with teachers across the hinterland, leading to poor quality of education and innumerable dropouts.

Digital India envisages making India a leader in digitally delivering health, education and other essential services. Our goal is to harness new technology to improve governance. We must be active in searching for ways to promote good governance by harnessing information and communication technology. At the end of the day, new technology promises to change the life in rural as well as in urban India.

I am mindful that technology itself is never the reason that the things change. Rather, it is how people choose to apply technology and whether they make wise decisions and address real needs that makes

the difference in the long run. We need skilled and knowledgeable manpower and professionals to drive this change for better. At the same breath I would like to emphasize on careful harnessing of technology to prevent any hazardous effect on ecology and creating a more sustainable world.

I would like to urge upon our graduating students to remember that they are central to the vision of a nation which is dynamic, prosperous, and inclusive. I can do no better than to quote Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of Nation : "You are the hope of the future. You will be called upon, while you are discharged from your College, to enter upon public life to lead the poor people of this country, I would therefore, like you students to have a sense of your responsibilities and show it in a tangible manner."

I wish each one of you success in your chosen career and I have no doubt that you will make a major contribution in making Odisha and India developed. May your path be blessed.

Jai Hind.

Inaugural Function of Indian Anthropology Congress

I am delighted to be here for the inauguration of the Indian Anthropology Congress co-hosted by the Department of Anthropology, Utkal University and the SC & ST Research and Training Institute, Bhubaneswar under the auspices of the Indian National Confederation and Academy of Anthropologists (INCAA). It pleases me to find that this major event is being held for the first time in Odisha. Further, I am told that a number of major national institutions like Anthropological Survey of India, Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Lalit Kala Akademi, Indian Council of Social Science Research, Indian Council of Medical Research, Department of Ayush, and Department of Science and Technology are extending their support to this Congress as collaborating partners. As you are aware, it is not very easy to isolate the roots of problems in any intricate situation. It is, therefore, important that by joining hands for greater understanding the deeper realities of the problems and then by collective approach we can be successful in searching out appropriate remedial measures.

I would like to congratulate the Indian National Confederation and Academy of Anthropologists (INCAA) as well as the Organizing Committee of this even for choosing "Tribal Transformations in Contemporary India : Issues and Challenges" as the focal theme for this edition of the Indian Anthropology Congress. It is befitting to deliberate on the theme in a State like Odisha which is home to as many as 62 tribal communities including 13 particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups and that presents a diversity of tribal cultures in terms of subsistence, art and craft. I am happy to note that scholars have already shared experiences and deliberated at length on a topic "Society, State and Governance" organized as part of pre-Congress programme. I am further told that the two other pre-Congress programmes, a workshop on "Tribal Art of Odisha" supported by Lalit Kala Akademi,

New Delhi and an exhibition of people of India by Anthropological Survey of India have further enriched the content of the Congress.

Coming to the focal theme of this Congress – "Tribal Transformations in Contemporary India : Issues and Challenges", I am to say that tribal development has been the priority sector for the Government since independence and several schemes and programmes have been implemented. There has been some development but the desired objective has been as elusive as ever. It is quite disheartening that tribal communities continue to remain backward and they are subjected to various forms of exploitation in spite of several legislations to safeguard their rights, and there is always a slip between the cup and the lip.

Sociologically speaking, Scheduled Tribes comprise diverse tribal groups with each tribe having distinct customs, including language, food, etc. Any aggregate analysis of 'Scheduled Tribes' therefore is meaningless because it cannot capture the uniqueness that defines each distinct tribal group. The overall proportion of Scheduled Tribe population in the country is only somewhat over eight percent. Their spatial distribution and specificities of concentration have helped creation of several tribal majority States and Autonomous Tribal Districts. Aspirations for achieving tribal identity on the one hand and attempts towards delineation of further tribal territories on the other have made the task even more difficult. Anthropologists, with their skill, knowledge and vast experience of intensive researches on tribal and non-tribal populations, will be of great help to find a way out.

Living close to nature, tgribals term forests as their ancestral home and there exists an emotional and spiritual attachment between the tribal and the forest landscape. Their socio-economic life is so intimately interrelated, inter-mingled with the forest that tribal and forest are almost inseparable. The tribal people mostly depend on forests from time immemorial. The importance of forests and forest products for survival, sustenance and livelihood of very large number of tribals is indisputable. They are the real custodians of forest produces and wealth. The Forest Rights Act is a significant step in the

direction towards recognising the pre-eminent rights of tribals on forest land, but it doesn't yet harmonise well with the development schemes and mining issues. In most cases, the latter take precedence over the former and tribals end up as 'encroachers' on protected forests.

The failures do not lie with the tribal people. They are not at fault because of their birth or skin. They are very much like other human beings. They do not ask for any special protection. They want to be treated equally like every other Indian and in broader sense like every other human being. Disparity, discrimination and prejudice will have to go paving way to the tribal transformations and evolution of a just society. They should be allowed to live in harmony with nature and not left struggling to live and earn their livelihood. They have to be made equal partners in our development process.

When it is about implementation of Government policies and programmes, I from my long experience, find that the link between Government and tribals is somewhat slender and the humane touch is often missing. You cannot expect to achieve desired objectives with reluctant officials and staff. The situation requires caring officials and the field staff entrusted with execution of the programmes. They have to be motivated and committed to the task and always willing to undertake confidence building measures to regain confidence and faith of tribals so that they welcome and extend wholehearted support to all the Government efforts. It would be better for developing a complete separate cadre of officers for the Scheduled Areas and this practice has been successful in parts of my own State Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.

Development, in real sense, cannot be achieved leaving behind this illustrious segment of our population which is a force to reckon with in art and culture, sports and games and other activities. Regular monitoring and supervision will help successful implementation of various programmes at the grassroots and deliver the results to beneficiaries. The basic problems of tribals are of poverty and indebtedness, illiteracy and malnutrition. For economic empowerment, tribal women should be encouraged to form self-help groups and

provided with all assistance. Nothing should be carried out that would compromise or forcefully compromise their hopes and aspirations. Simultaneously the tribals should learn to take advantage of the opportunities available in this fast changing world and equip themselves accordingly without sacrificing their age-old culture and tradition. Music, song and dance assume great significance in tribal life. The indigenous art and crafts embody the creative imagination of tribal artisans and craftsmen. Every effort should be taken to prevent degeneration of tribal ethos and all-out efforts must be undertaken for preservation of their culture and traditions.

Education is the key for progress and development of tribals and bringing about transformations in their lives. Education liberates. It enables us to be aware of our rights and sharpens our world-view. When we look at the literacy figure of the tribals and take example of Odisha and start comparing with the State's overall literacy rate, it is far from encouraging. The female literacy rate in tribal communities continues to be low. Besides this, dropout rate amongst tribal children is quite alarming. The situation needs a drastic change if we are to progress. The Government is taking a number of steps and in Odisha there are also several welcome measures being undertaken. However, proper implementation of the schemes and programmes is the need of the hour.

Health and nutrition assumes great importance in the life of tribals. In many parts of India tribal population suffers from a number of diseases owing to lack of proper hygiene and healthcare. Infant mortality is quite high among some of the tribal communities. Malnutrition is common and has affected the general health of the tribal children as it lowers the ability to resist infection, leads to chronic illness and sometimes leads to brain impairment. We certainly need more concerted approach to combat these maladies.

However, the disturbing factor in tribal areas which challenges peace and good governance is insurgent activities. While economic divide is cited as one of the main reasons for such violence, it is acknowledged that such disparities are rooted in a history of

marginalization and deprivation. It is not just on economic ground. 'Inclusion of tribals' should be seen as a process of including the excluded sections of the population whose participation is essential in the very design of the development process and not merely as intangible targets of development programmes. It is necessary that steps should be taken to make tribals more informed about the development schemes. We need to lay an enduring foundation as we strive for tribal transformations by empowering them with the tools that raise their status, socially and economically. In Odisha, to prevent tribal youths from being lured by the Naxals the State Government's measures for connectivity of the far-flung areas along with a slew of activities for tribal economic wellbeing are certainly welcome.

To grapple with the changing situations of contemporary tribal life, it has become necessary to utilise contemporary social anthropological thinking into practice. For anthropologists, this is a moment in which it is necessary to take up the sort of broad challenges – to redefine the field of inquiry and research in relation to tribal upliftment.

I believe that through such engagements, as have been initiated by the Indian Confederation and Academy of Anthropologists (INCAA) and through support of the collaborating partners, we shall be in a relatively better position in understanding the gravity of the contemporary maladies. I look forward to the results of this extremely valuable exercise. With these words, I wish the Indian Anthropology Congress a great success.

Jai Hind.

1st Convocation Ceremony of Xavier University, Bhubaneswar

I am delighted to preside over the first Convocation of Xavier University being held along with the 24th Convocation of Xavier Institute of Management Bhubaneswar in the presence of such a distinguished gathering. I thank the University authorities for extending to me the privilege of addressing the first Convocation of this new university arrived on the ever expanding horizon of higher education in Odisha.

Xavier University which has been christened after the Saint Francis Xavier has evolved from the renowned XIMB, the flagship business school. XIMB is a well-known name in management education in the country for the last 27 years. The dedication of this institution for grooming professionals in the areas of management is commendable. It is heartening to find that the passion for excellence that it instills among the students is a lifelong passion. As alumni of this institute, they should be determined to move up the ladder of excellence for bigger causes and higher aspirations.

It is wellknown that sound education is a critical indicator to the wellbeing of a society. It is the basic human right, which transforms an ordinary human being to an enlightened citizen. It is an important instrumentality which is crucial for social and economic empowerment.

It is heartening that this private unitary university is driven by the vision of a globally recognised centre of learning and service to the people of our motherland. The young university stands on,a foundation of vibrant academic culture towards imparting proper professional and technical education. The university has now Schools of Business Management, Human Resource Management, Rural Management and School of Sustainability all of which are vital disciplines for the socio-economic growth of our country.

Of late, management education is quite important in the Indian context. One of the key aspects of any management programme is to understand the functions of management: be it human resource

development, marketing, production, manufacturing, sales, forecasting and so on. An understanding of all these is important particularly when a lot of Indian companies are trying to get a global footprint. The global scenario is certainly competitive and India needs a lot more qualified management professionals to meet global standards.

Let me give you two examples. One sector that has been fuelling India's growth process has been IT. IT companies are expected to display a certain level of performance and standard to their clients abroad. Our professionals working with many of expatriate companies are able to deliver what is expected out of them, because of the certifications which establish their credibility. IBM wouldn't have built a team over 80,000 professionals, if its India centre was not able to deliver the standards required by its global clients.

On the other hand, take the case of infrastructure sector in the country. The Economic Survey shows that we are behind schedule in infrastructure-related projects and because of that costs are over-shooting. This disparity between abundance of knowledge on the one hand and poverty in commitment for the common good is a big challenge for every thinking citizen.

Every management guru is today talking of innovation and out-of-box thinking. Thomas Alva Edison, who invented electricity, said invention is 1 per cent inspiration, and 99 per cent perspiration. What he meant is that the creative aspect is critical. Every leading manufacturer employs creative people who can create an idea for a product or service that is unique and special. It is wise to learn the best use of opportunities as one may not always get them again. Let me substantiate this with an anecdote. Many years ago, a large American shoe manufacturer sent two sales representatives out to different parts of Australia in which aborigins lived. Sometime later the company received telegrams from both sales representatives. The first one said, "No business here ….. natives don't wear shoes." The second one said, "Great opportunity here ….. natives don't wear shoes."

Management is actually a capacity to cope with scarcity and uncertainty. All the theories of the management and the training in

various aspects of management and skill development are all about equipping the capacity to cope with scarcity and uncertainty. Resource optimization with capacity for inventiveness and skills of decision making has to be made an enduring aspect of managerial personality.

In different aspects of life the only thing permanent is change. We are presently witnessing the changes brought about in the business environment under the impact of IT, globalization, de-regulation, e-commerce, mergers and take overs. The entire global industrial and management climate has undergone a sea change. Today management with the help of these new trends can assume a creative and responsive role to ensure sustainability of organizations, institutions and create globally vibrant business environments. It is for the emerging managers to think how the problems can be addressed through technological innovations and at the same time to ensure and provide an effective leadership that optimally utilizes the resources of the large man-power. Today management encompasses effective utilization of the man-power resources, industrial resources and financial resources and the technological resources so as to create a competitive edge both for the industry and the country and at the same time anticipate and be prepared for oncoming changes.

Today we are in a knowledge economy. Knowledge is power and it is the wealth. The knowledge and information revolution has changed many priorities and made revolutionary changes in the development matrix. Countries which were not blessed with abundant capital and managerial resources suddenly discovered that with right knowledge and the ability to put it to good use, they can overcome their handicaps and steal a march over many other countries which were richly endowed with capital and material resources. This change has been possible because of sweeping wave of knowledge and information revolution. The managers of the future have to learn to ride the crest of this wave. They have to be aware of knowledge gap and overcome it through acquisition, absorption and communication of knowledge.

Here is a question. Why is it that a nation of more than a billion despite being endowed with so many natural resources of substantial

quantities lags behind in economic growth. While we are able to spend space crafts to Mars, we cannot take literacy, primary healthcare and access to basic amenities to the masses. I think what we lack is proper management; I mean management of materials, natural resources and human resources. We have to manage one billion strong population so that they become an asset for the nation and not its liability. This is the greatest challenge before the nation and it is also before our management professionals to ensure both economic development and social development. It is a widely accepted fact that the economic development of a nation should nurture and further social development. Social development, in turn, sustains economic development. In our country we are confronted by inter-regional and intra-regional disparities in terms of socio-economic development. Until the society, as a whole, is equitably developed and can both support and sustain economic growth we cannot hope to achieve all-round development. It is imperative that our management professionals and management of business ventures identify areas that have untapped potential and unexploited natural resources so that the region would develop and in the process we achieve development in the country. Equally important is the aspect of environmental protection and our effort should be for sustainable development. Management is not just about generating surpluses but it has to be intricately linked and should be oriented towards social welfare.

Convocation is one of those great moments in university life. I can sense in the air the transition to a new phase of life. Dear graduates, Congratulations! This is your day, you deserve the honor and the recognition and it is a real pleasure to be here with you. Now, you graduate at a time to make Indian economy stronger. Challenging times create times of opportunity. You have the opportunity to change the future, to open a new frontier and build a better future. You have the opportunity to position India as the global leader in many sectors.

I commend the faculty members who have taken great care in shaping the young minds and building capacities in them which will facilitate them to achieve greater heights in their professional career.

This is indeed the requirement in the 21st century knowledge society. I also greet the family members participating in this convocation function.

I am frequently asked, "So what was your plan to achieve such eminence in life?" As if I could have figured out which job to take right out of college that would lead me to serve as Parliamentary Secretary to first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and later in the Union Ministry and now as Governor. Well, let me tell all the graduates here, I didn't have a plan. But what I did do was to identify the job where I could find some scope for realizing my dream which was contributing to the well being of my society within my sphere. Work about which you are passionate will only make your work that much better. And so my wish for you today, on your day of graduation, is that you will, too, find a career motivated by your dream. In whatever you do, give the world the best you have, and find excellence in your lives as citizens of this great nation. I would like you to practice excellence in its full spirit. I have been struck by how 'dedication' has been a thread throughout your stay in the campus pushing you to excel.

Xavier University is a diverse, inclusive and welcoming place, and the wisdom and knowledge you have learnt here from your faculty, the affection of students and staff can be incredibly transformative as you get ready to respond to the questions and concerns of tomorrow and it will surely help you achieve your goals.I wish our students with enhanced managerial skills will be able to contribute to the industrial, managerial and economic activities of the country.

With these words, I wish Xavier University many more years of service to the motherland.

Jai Hind.

7th Convocation of Fakir Mohan University, Balasore

I am delighted to preside over the Seventh Convocation of Fakir Mohan University. At the outset, I pay my rich tribute to late Fakir Mohan Senapati, a great son of the soil on whom this University is named after. This literary genius is well known for the role he played as the saviour of Odia literature during the early 20th Century. His creative and unique writings carrying the message of social reforms enriched Odia literature immensely. I also take this opportunity to appreciate the efforts of the pioneers who have contributed in establishing this University and played significant role in its progress all these years.

I am happy to extend a cordial welcome to our Chief Guest Dr. Ayyappan, a distinguished agricultural scientist of the country.

I thank him for his enlightening address and I am sure our students as well as members of the academic community of the University must have found it inspiring in their pursuit of excellence.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate all the candidates, who were awarded doctoral degrees in various disciplines, all the medal winners and students on attaining degrees in Under Graduate and Post Graduate levels in various disciplines. I fully understand the joy and excitement that the convocation holds for our graduating students. Dear students, it is a special day for you.

I am happy to share joy and happiness with you, your family members and your teachers who have all along supported and moulded you to this distinction. You will be expressing your deepest gratitude to this University which made you the person you are now. No one can underestimate the role of the alma mater in formation of one's individuality and personality. Even self-made people cannot reject the importance of their student days and their influence on their lives.

You came here with ideas, aspirations and dreams. You wanted to contribute your talents and gifts to the academic community and to

the society. Certainly, it was not so easy. But your zeal and determination along with the faculty of the University guided you to do so. It is here that you understood the value of academic success and the importance of skill development.

Today you are graduating from the University and entering a new phase of your life which is exciting, competitive and challenging and I would say full of opportunities. It is only your inherent strength, will power and real skills that can help you to surpass the challenges. Work to the best of your potential. Always search for and learn from new opportunities to improve and strengthen yourself. The secret of great success is the ability to see what others do not see, and do what others do not do. Always remember that success is a journey and not a destination and make it a habit.

Today's world is driven by technology. The advances made by technology are triggering revolution in every sphere and technology has made the world smaller, more open, more visible and less distant. The advent of Internet and emergence of computers, Smartphone, i-Pad gave rise to a powerful network that has transformed opportunities for learning and communicating. But at the same time it is found that for every person in the world who has access to this technology, five people don't. That means many creative minds are left out and unable to hone their talents or contribute their ideas to the world. We need as many people as possible to have access to modern technology for the development and progress of the nation.

The world in the 21st century is a knowledge based society with multiple opportunities, driven by knowledge economy. American writer Denis Waitely in his book "Empires of the Mind" specifically emphasises that what worked yesterday, will not work today. The global economy has moved from the state when "natural resources defined power" to the present state where "knowledge is power". Our young men and women have to empower them with knowledge and be the enabler. India has 65% of its population under the category of youth and as such the possibility of acquisition of knowledge will be faster in India than elsewhere and that will be to the advantage to our

country. Various studies have indicated that more than 50% of children currently in primary schools, will grow up to work in jobs, that do not exist today. We need vocational education alongside mainstream education and development of skill at the earliest. Skill deficits are a big concern and challenge. It is heartening that the Government acknowledges skill development and vocational education as a priority sector and it is the need of the hour to ensure that our youth have tools and proficiency required to excel in today's professional environment. 'Skill India', 'Digital India' and 'Make in India' are the endeavours and commitment to this cause. I call upon the university to play a key role in realising the objectives of these programmes.

In today's information age the University play more important roles than ever. Demand for the services of higher education is growing, and therein lies the challenge. Then how do universities meet that demand? Whom do they educate and how? How do they measure and improve that education? And, with the knowledge generated at universities at a premium, what services beyond education should they provide?

Let me make a request of the deans and the professors – the intellectual leaders here at the university to ask themselves. Should our best minds be dedicated to solving our biggest problems? Should our students learn about the depth of poverty ... the prevalence of hunger ... the scarcity of clean water... lack of public awareness on cleanliness and sanitation ... the girls kept out of school ... the children who die from diseases we can cure? These are not symbolic questions and university must think over it seriously as it grooms the future citizens, future professionals and future leaders of the country.

Universities are now facing enormous challenges to find out approaches to address national priorities like hunger, poverty, and health care with the use of technology and social inequities. Enormous opportunities lie in the sciences, with technology fueling discoveries in bio-technology and a host of other areas. Universities of the future will have to decide how best to take advantage of the scientific

opportunities and contribute to progress and development with new findings.

Every university has also to figure out how to encourage robust growth in the Humanities. While some may think there is a danger that the Humanities may wither away at the advent of multi-dimensional growth of Science, yet societal and cultural changes and the ethical dilemmas posed by scientific advances can only be answered by the Humanities.

The traditional focus of the Humanities on questions of value, meaning and ethics are more important than ever before. Far from marginalizing the Humanities, universities must look for ways to encourage humanists to address such questions in ways we can all understand so they can help us build a world where our scientific advances don't overwhelm us, but are made to serve humane purposes.

This is a much more formidable agenda. It is also more significant. Universities matter more to society today than ever before. Deciding how to use talents for the good of society and to prepare students for a 21st century working environment is an awesome responsibility and of vital interest to everyone in the university administration. The quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizens which in turn depends on the quality of their education. It is higher education that provides competent leadership by producing human resource who can shoulder the responsibility of contributing to the development of the nation.

I understand that the University through its faculty, alumni and students is doing its bit to be socially responsible and improve the lives of people as they are doing it in 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'. But can we do more? Can Fakir Mohan University dedicate its intellect to improving the lives of people who have never even hear its name? Let me quote Microsoft founder Bill Gates who always remembered his mother saying, "From those to whom much is given, much is expected." Odisha has enormous expectations of these graduates from Fakir Mohan University who may provide right leadership in diverse fields.

Here I raise a serious concern over the quality of our universities. It is an irony that we do not feature in Top 100 Universities in the world higher education in India in spite of having a system of higher education which is the second largest system in the world. It is high time for us to find out where we stand, where we lack and what is to be done to improve the quality of higher education system in conformity with international benchmarks. If higher education is a market, then our product is knowledge. This knowledge comes from our research and that is why we should concentrate more on research. With our faculty, we should consistently strive to enhance levels of research quality considerably. We also need to work across traditional disciplinary boundaries, to tackle the complex and multi-dimensional problems that face society today. May Fakir Mohan University raise its level using all the resources at its disposal and also bring in innovation in standards of teaching, workforce needs and design of curriculum.

The University is proud to confer D.Litt. (Honoris Causa) on three eminent persons for their significant contribution in upholding the literary and cultural traditions of the State. I congratulate them and wish their examples will inspire our students to achieve excellence in life.

Dear graduates, I advise you not to hesitate to step over the threshold of the door that is already open for you. And do remember the words of Swami Vivekananda and I quote, "The greatest religion is to be true to your own nature. Have faith in yourselves. You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own soul. The secret of true success, of true happiness is this: the man or woman who asks for no return, the perfectly unselfish person, is the most successful. They alone live, who live for others."

With these words, I wish our young men and women luck and perseverance. I wish them all success on their life path. I also wish Fakir Mohan University all success in its endeavours and may it scale new heights in achieving academic excellence.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of State Level Quality Workshop

Let me at the outset extend hearty wishes to all of you present here in the inauguration ceremony of the State Level Quality Workshop. National Board of Accreditation (NBA), New Delhi deserves all our appreciation for this. This is an initiative of Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT) and as Chancellor, I feel delighted to be amongst some of the best technological brains of the state and nation.

The term Quality has much wider connotation than it normally implies. We are citizens of 21st century and are aware that knowledge is key to our progress and overall prosperity. And the present day knowledge- driven society depends heavily on scientific and technological discovery, invention and more importantly, innovation. Knowledge without new discovery is useless, science without invention is static and technology without innovation is outdated.

It is against this backdrop that this workshop on various facets of Quality gathers immense importance. I am aware that some of the best minds are present here who, during the course of the workshop will dwell on the subject and delve deep into various analytical as well as practical dimensions of it. They are the best persons with technical as well as technological insight to come up with suggestions and advices that may prove extremely valuable for educationists, academicians, administrators and policy makers.

However, I will try to focus on the value of quality in our lives in general and in the field of education in particular. Assurance of quality in the field of education, particularly technical education, is a difficult proposition, but not impossible. There are various ways to assure and ensure quality. Most of you who are inside the system are very much aware of the loopholes existing in the system. I need not elaborate. As Chancellor of General as well as Technical Universities, I am at times pained by developments in academic institutions; developments that contribute to decline in quality; the clinching evidence being a sharp decline in manufacturing sector in India.

Anyway, there are a number of preconditions to assuring quality; namely discipline, constant upgradation of syllabus, appropriate coordination among stakeholders and most importantly research. Creating a massive pool of human resource becomes a futile exercise unless this resource is qualitatively the very best. And ensuring quality at the top most level may earn us global accolades, but will never transform the quality of life of the common man. And this is where the crux of the matter is. Does this concept of assuring quality in the field of education, particularly technical education, encompass human life? What I imply by this is simple. Does the final product, a byproduct of scientific and technical quality assurances only improves the quality of the material OR does if improve our quality of life and quality of living? In fact why do I express such concern? For an answer, we will have to look for concrete examples. However, before that let me quote former President of the USA, Dwight D Eisenhower had said and I quote, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its labourers, the genius of its scientists and the hopes of its children. This is not the way of life at all in any true sense."

This had come from the President of the most modern, most powerful and most affluent nation. This has explained what I was trying to say. Ensuring quality of a product born out of technical and scientific intervention relates to the material, but how that product enhances our quality of life is a completely different matter altogether. What is the use of inventing a qualitatively good pen if the user of it does not know how to write? What is the use of a high quality water filter if the common man does not have the power to buy it? Or, we may invent the most modern vehicles, but we do not have quality roads; what use is the product even if we have assured global quality standards?

Do I sound a bit pessimistic? Far from it! My only objective is to exhort you all to find ways and means so that we can also enhance

and add quality to the end-objective of a qualitatively good product. The end-objective of a pen is "to write", the end-objective of a water filter is "to drink safe water" and the end-objective of a modern vehicle is to "transport"! If these end-objectives are not fulfilled, what for are our discovery, invention and innovation? Do we enhance the quality of human life and enhance the quality of standard of living if we focus only on material enhancement of quality?

Now, we arrive at a point where we have to find out the correct balance between the material and non-material, the physical and moral, the technical and the ethical; and the scientific and the spiritual! Our scientists, innovators, plan and policy makers need to join hands to come up with a holistic approach to this. Intellectuals and free thinkers can contribute to the process. We all know how technically innovative products bereft of ethical sense and how scientific discoveries bereft of morals caused harm to human beings and society to devastating effect! It is time to ponder over these.

Let me quote Isaac Asimov, who said, "The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom!" Science and technology aims at improving life, so also its products and byproducts. The ultimate goal is not only new and still qualitatively newer products because it is only a part of the whole objective; the objective being peace, happiness, love, tolerance and concern for all living beings.

I would like to quote Winston Churchill here and he had said, "Mankind has never been in this position before. Without having improved appreciably in virtue or enjoying wiser guidance, it has got into its hands for the first time the tools by which it can unfailingly accomplish its own extermination. This is the point in human destinies to which all the glories and toils of men have at last led them. They would do well to pause and ponder upon their new responsibilities. Death stands at attention, obedient, ready; if called on, to pulverize what is left of civilization".

Churchill had said this after the Second World War. He had hinted at degeneration of virtue and scientific inventions that can

destroy civilization many times over! The world has improved vastly in the fields of science, technology, engineering and medicine! Quality in these fields has been enhanced thousand times. Every day we have qualitatively better products launched. And every hour mankind is witness to degeneration in ethics, values and morals. Unless we are able to strike right balance between the two, we will do so at our peril.

In fact, human civilization is good with quality assured scientific and technological knowledge and products, but it is much better off with qualitative improvement in morals and values. Civilization devoid of morality will always have the tendency of making technology the instruments of destruction. Let us not close our eyes to this.

With these words, I again thank the organizers and the BPUT for giving me an opportunity to share my thought and feeling on the subject. I am aware that those present here will analyze various facets of the issue from different angles, but I would love them to ponder over what I have just said. I am a born optimist and I believe, the world will always be a better place to live in than it was in the past, for science and morals are poised to join forces. As an afterthought, let me draw your attention to a saddening fact that none of the Indian universities figure in the global list of 500 best universities! And in the global Happiness Index, India figures towards the end of the list! Does it have anything to do with our quest for quality? Let us search for an answer.

With these words, I wish you all a very intense deliberation on the subject; and issues and sub-issues surrounding it. As Chancellor, I would love to see a compilation of these bright ideas.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of 1st year Lab. Complex of IIT Bhubaneswar

I am delighted to visit IIT Bhubaneswar for the inauguration of the 1st year Lab Complex and happy to address the students and faculty members of this premier institute.

I understand that the Institute came into existence on July 22 in 2008. We are very proud of our IITs' achievements since the first IIT Kharagpur came up in 1951 under the far sighted vision of first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. His vision was that - the IITs should provide scientists and technologists of the highest calibre who would engage in research, design and development to help building the nation towards self-reliance in her technological needs.

IITs as institute of national importance, over the years, stand tall with their achievements. Our graduates are highly sought after in all professional fields. The IIT brand name is clearly well established and recognized worldwide. Though we may have achieved a major part of Pandit Nehruji's vision yet we have to work hard to make IITs as leading technical institutions in the world.

I am told that this lab complex is the first of the academic buildings completed in IIT's own campus. This complex will be accommodating both theory and laboratory classes of B.Tech. 1st and 2nd year students. I wish all other constructions will be completed in time to the delight of everyone and the Institute will start functioning full-fledged from its own campus very soon.

Laboratory is an important means of instruction. It is said: laboratory provides first-hand experience in observation and manipulation of the materials of science and is superior to other methods of developing, understanding and appreciation. Laboratory training aims at developing skills necessary for more advanced study or research. Five groups of objectives may be achieved through the use of the laboratory: These are cognitive understanding, conceptual analysis, acquiring skills, problem solving and finally risk taking. I hope our budding engineers and scientists will nurture the requisite

sense of inquiry as they embark on a journey towards innovation and invention.

However, in our research achievements, although IITs are amongst the best in India, we have a long way to go to be counted amongst the best in the world. I am given to understand that the undergraduate research programmes initiated now have been successful in engaging our bright young minds into the research culture early in their career. I want our students to be determined to change the world with their novel and innovative ideas. I would like to urge on developing more means of collaboration with foreign institutions that would enable our students to get exposed to international arena, exchange their ideas and interact with foreign scholars so that quality of our research work improves significantly.

It is our sincere endeavor to keep students abreast of the latest developments in their respective fields. The increased emphasis on research will lead to increase the number of research scholars and improve the quality of research work significantly.

Today the effort is on to include educational institutions in developing rural India. Hon'ble Prime Minister exhorted IITs to adopt a village and develop appropriate technologies. I am happy to know that the IIT Bhubaneswar has responded promptly to the Centre's "Unnat Bharat Abhiyan" programme by adopting six villages where they will be developing the villages by providing affordable technological interventions and expertise on issues such as improvement in the quality of school education, Internet connectivity in the schools and villages near the campus, water purification, sanitation, health care, skill development, awareness towards digital India and renewable energy use.

Entrepreneurs from IIT have proved to be the game changers in the world of New Business Ideas. From education and sports to dissemination of ideas, these entrepreneurs from IIT have chased their dreams and converted them in their professions. While I address the budding entrepreneurs I would like you to remember that

entrepreneurship is all about translating your dreams into reality and fostering right attitude to life.

Dear students, I would like you to take a moment and ponder over the future. What kind of future do you want for your IIT? If you are a student, what do you want to say about this institute when you graduate? If you are an alumni, what kind of place do you want to come back to? If you are a member of the faculty or staff, at what kind of place do you want to work? And if you are friends or well-wishers, what kind of place should this university become following your investment of time and resources?

Being an IITian, you have a good experience of how it feels to be in IIT - the most prestigious group of engineering colleges in India. Being in IIT means coming out of your comfort zone and making your dreams come true.

You have come here full of enthusiasm and high ambition. Enthusiasm should always be your driving factor to excellence. You need to stay motivated. I want you to make all of us proud with your success and achievements.

IITians like you will lead India's race for ideas. The India that you will graduate into is much more capable of using your technological prowess. But never forget your responsibility to give back to the community. I wish you unlimited ambition and great success. But as you go out in the world, remember your tradition where you grow in an environment of respect and tolerance. By upholding it, you will be repaying your teachers in this premier institution, and your parents who worked so hard to send you here. And you will be doing the country a great service.

To the faculty, I would urge them to raise the visibility of your fine institution. You must show the world who you are. You must show them that you are a premiere, global, technological institute. The institute's reputation begins with the faculty. It is their research and publications, and their global influence, which will build the reputation of the institute.

I would like to thank the faculty and staff of the university, because they play such a critical role in this university. They are often a mentor and friend to students, or a person to talk to when family is far away. Their caring nature will allow many students to overcome rough times either academically or personally.

IITs are the pride of the country. I understand that the vision of IIT Bhubaneswar is to be a highly respected Institute in the world for its distinctive knowledge and this should be your motivation. I would like to reiterate that the challenge before IIT Bhubaneswar, is to maintain and enhance its position as an Institute which excels in its education and research programmes.

Let me conclude with what the then Prime Minister Pandit Nehruji told in the first convocation address of IIT Kharagpur in 1956. He said and I quote, "Here stands the fine monument of India, representing India's urges, India's future in the making. This picture seems to me symbolical of the changes that are coming to India." We have great ambitions for IIT Bhubaneswar. And those ambitions can only be reached when all of you work hard. I am sure IIT Bhubaneswar will draw inspiration from these words and make its journey truly meaningful. I am confident that IIT Bhubaneswar will play a critical role in making technological leaders of the country.

With these words, I wish students bright future and also wish IIT Bhubaneswar every success in its future endeavours.

Jai Hind.

35th Convocation of Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology

I am happy to preside over the 35thConvocation of Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) today and address the students, faculty members, distinguished scientists and others present on this annual academic ceremony of the university. Let me at the outset extend my best wishes to all of you.

It is a great pleasure for me to extend a hearty welcome to our Chief Guest Dr. Panjab Singh. Dr. Singh is a distinguished scientist and administrator having vast knowledge and experience. His constant support to agricultural research and education has paved way for many significant achievements. His words of inspiration and wisdom would surely enlighten and motivate students and faculty for excellence in all their endeavours.

I extend my warm felicitations to the distinguished scientists who have been conferred with 'Honorary Doctorates' for their life time contributions to the cause of the society. I expect them to continue the good work which will inspire our students in new endeavours.

Convocation is a special occasion that means so much in the lives of students. It is that wonderful day when the years of academic life culminate into a coveted degree. It is a moment of great joy. Let me congratulate all the students who have received degrees today and also who have been awarded with medals for their meritorious achievement. Dear students, your accomplishments have made all of us proud. It is the affection, good will and guidance of your parents, faculty, staff and friends which motivated you for your achievements.

Convocation marks an ending to academic life but it also marks a new beginning. As you step out from the comfort zone of the university, remember that the challenge ahead of you is quite big, but never bigger than your intrinsic worth properly explored. To excel on your new path, you need to pursue the excitement of intellectual curiosity. Overcoming difficulties will make you better. I am sure;

your education has made you capable of entering a field which is at the centre of our country's economy. I am confident you will deliver with sincerity, industry and dedication. I wish you all the very best.

Agriculture has a significant role in emergence and development of human civilization. It remains life and livelihood for more than 70 percent of country's population. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had once observed and I quote: "everything else can wait but not agriculture" (unquote). It was true then, it is true now. And rightly agriculture receives top priority in our policy formulation ever since independence. Our Agricultural universities are the focal points of agricultural growth and change. Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology, the second oldest agricultural university in the country, has spearheaded agricultural education for over five decades and made significant contributions in research and technology development. Whether it is development of high yielding crop varieties or women friendly equipments or producing knowledgeable graduates and scholars to harness the advances of technology or promoting farmer-friendly approaches in its extension programmes, this University has always been at the forefront. By integrating students, teachers and experimental farms the university has achieved remarkable results. It is quite heartening that the students of OUAT have been outstanding both in academics and in co- curricular activities. I congratulate the students for their achievements and the University for its constant endeavours. As Chancellor, I wish that OUAT would continue to be a pacesetter in taking a multi-disciplinary approach to solve emerging challenges on agriculture front and supplement State's efforts in improving production and productivity.

Our country has come a long way from the days of importing food to the present days when we export food. The green revolution, with high yielding varieties of wheat, rice and other crops transformed Indian Agriculture and we became a major exporter of food. We have surmounted the challenge to food security. Consistent thrust on Research and Development programmes, technology adoption and improved agricultural practices contributed to rapid expansion in

productivity in agriculture and allied sectors. The support of our agricultural institutions of higher learning like OUAT and the sweat and toil of our agricultural scientists and farmers are instrumental in making this transformation.

The country invests heavily in agricultural research and development. It makes sense. Science, technologies and innovations assume far greater significance as the country's population rises, land resource becomes scarce and water level declines. The focus must therefore be on how to produce more food, with less land and water, while conserving the environment.

Declining water level will surely play a defining role in the 21st century. When coupled with population growth, it is a problem that is expected to only grow in magnitude and urgency. For most crops, production and yield is directly related to crop water use. A decrease in applied water will often directly decrease yield. Therefore, improved water management in agriculture is the need of the hour to increase water availability, reduce soil erosion, and lead to increased and diversified agricultural yields. Farmers may be sensitised to adopt a number of ways to achieve efficiency in water-use. It may be by growing a diverse array of crops suited to local conditions, especially in drought-prone regions; by practicing agro-forestry or growing perennial crops to build strong root systems and reduce soil erosion. Further, maintaining healthy soils, either by applying organic fertilizer or growing cover crops to retain soil moisture; or by adopting irrigation systems like "drip" lines that deliver water directly to plants' roots are also quite vital. Not only smart water management is necessary to combat declining water level, it is necessary to help our food system adapt to a potentially harsh and uncertain future. It is high time to make agriculture water-use efficiency a national priority. I look upon to our agriculture scientists with optimism to bring in innovation to harness technology and implement proper management strategies that will improve water use efficiency without decreasing yield and maintaining production standards.

Agriculture is considered to be one of the most vulnerable sectors and especially in the hazards of frequent climate change. The Declaration of the World Summit on Food 2009 stated and I quote, "Climate change poses additional severe risks to food security and the agriculture sector. Its expected impact is particularly fraught with danger for smallholder farmers in developing countries". (Unquote) Now the effect of climate change is making it imperative to rethink our agriculture and food system. Scientists have already alerted global policy makers to the perils of climate change over the coming decades. So we cannot afford to neglect climate change.

In an age of climate change, policies for the secure supply of food to the nation have to be a major priority for government and the scientific community. Sustainable food supply is of the utmost importance for the wellbeing of an ever increasing country's population. We must take necessary steps to enable all farmers to adapt to, and mitigate the impact of, climate change through appropriate technologies and innovative practices that would improve the resilience of farming systems, thus enhancing their food security.

Techniques such as agro-forestry and organic agriculture require less tilling of the land and thus keep more carbon stored in the soil. Our approaches should be to seize greenhouse gases by better agricultural practices. Increased production to meet our growing needs must be done in ways that optimize the use of scarce resources of the planet and that protect and conserve ecosystems. Time is now ripe for identifying new measures for sustainable agricultural practices.

Research is the key to find solutions to many problems. However, the foremost concern on research today is the qualitative aspect. The other concern is adopting proper focus the university needs in its research activities. Presently, the Universities are supposedly concentrating on fundamental research. Research has increasingly become a group activity and in this context collaboration of our scholars with scholars from other universities and other laboratories is to be ensured. Inter-disciplinary research and inter-departmental collaboration has to be made a reality. The research should focus in

formulating proper technology so that the fruits of research reach the field. Time has come to reconsider these foci.

Dissemination of right technology and information to farmers are quite important at this juncture. However, it is often seen that the outputs of research activities do not reach the farmers at the grassroot. Therefore, lab to land programme may be effectively taken up with information technology and Krishi Vigyan Kendras are to be coordinated with laboratory and researchers for desired result. I would urge upon Agricultural research and extension organizations to develop innovative strategies for dissemination of information to the farmers.

Agriculture, as I said, is the lifeline and major source of livelihood in Odisha. The State has immense agricultural potential. We are changing the narrative in our horticultural sector. We are transforming our livestock sector. We are also working to make Odisha self-sufficient in fish production, by encouraging aquaculture, inland fisheries and marine fisheries. We need to develop the export market for fresh produce from Odisha into national and international market. To unlock the potential of agriculture to drive the economy, the State embarks on a major transformation of the agricultural sector. The State is doing this through the rapid transformation of key agricultural value chains – from the farm to the table.

However, our agricultural production system is often adversely affected by vagaries of monsoon and natural disasters. The erratic distribution of rainfall in the last Kharif resulted in severe drought in the western tracts of the state pushing farmers to distress. This calls for immediate attention to protect the farmers' interest and provide them adequate technological support. OUAT must play a crucial role in infusing the spirit of necessity among scientists, extension functionaries, input supplying agencies and policy makers to work together with commitment to address the emerging situation.

The youth are the engine of growth. They are to be equipped with knowledge, skill, wisdom and dedication and encouraged to come up with innovative ideas to find solution to every problem. We are one

of the youngest nations in the world with around 65 per cent of our population under the age of 35. Our youth will be the driver of India's growth in the years to come. Agriculture offers great scope to our youth to realise and lead a fulfilling career. There are many avenues within agricultural science which are yet to be fully explored namely specialisation in broader areas of soil science, plant science, livestock management and food science to just name a few. The nation needs a huge pool of professional skilled professionals to fully realise the potential of agricultural sector. Here the role of Agricultural Universities is very important to meet the country's need with sound agricultural education. Our vision should be to make OUAT a world-class university for agricultural studies and research. Much is expected from the faculties, scientists, research scholars and students of the university. They must strive to contribute their best efforts to cultivate a safe and sound future for agriculture and allied sectors. I wish OUAT will leave no stone unturned to achieve the goal.

With these words, I wish the students bright future and university all success. Thank you and God bless you.

Jai Hind.

7th Convocation of Biju Patnaik University of Technology, Rourkela

I am delighted to preside over the Seventh Annual Convocation of Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT) today. The Vice Chancellor, Board of Management, Faculty, Staff and Graduating students deserve appreciation for their determination and hard work that has culminated to this momentous occasion.

In the birth centenary year of the legendary late Biju Patnaik, the Seventh Convocation is a true tribute to the great leader who envisaged a modern scientific and techno savvy Odisha. He dreamt Odisha to be the frontrunner in producing quality technocrats and scientific luminaries who may become leaders in global scenario. I take this opportunity to pay my respect and homage to this illustrious son of the State. BPUT which began its journey in 2002 is striving to fulfil the dream of this illustrious personality and the aspirations of people of Odisha and of the nation.

It gives me immense pleasure to extend a hearty welcome to our Chief Guest, Prof. Ved Prakash, Chairman, University Grants Commission to this august occasion. I am sure, his very presence and enlightening talk must have left a strong impression on our students and faculties as they strive for excellence.

Convocation epitomizes the fruition of every student's academic pursuit. It is also a moment to look back at what one has achieved in the academic programme undertaken as he/she charts the way forward into the professional careers of choice.

Today's Convocation is a clear testimony that the graduating students have successfully gone through a rigorous academic experience that has culminated in the academic degree in the relevant discipline. The post graduate students are also being conferred degrees in this Convocation Ceremony. I would be delighted to see a

tremendous increase in the number of Masters and PhD degree holders in the forthcoming convocation ceremonies because I have set this as one of the indicators of Universities academic performance.

I congratulate all the degree holders and medal winners and feel immensely happy in sharing their moment of joy and happiness. The society will judge our young men and women from today based on quality of their service, ethical behaviour, and integrity they display as a result of the values and skills imparted in them by this university. I therefore exhort them to be steadfast and seize the right opportunity that offers the best service to mankind, so that we may foster transformation of the livelihoods of our people.

The world today is a Global Village which nurtures stiff competition demanding for adoption of top notch technologies. As a result, the government continues to invest in universities because of the critical role its people play in creation, adaptation and use of knowledge that are crucial in transforming India into a knowledge based economy. It is for universities to ensure that all their academic programmes and courses are relevant and internationally competitive.

I am indeed happy that this University offers undergraduates and Post-graduates programmes including Ph.Ds ranging over disciplines of engineering, architecture, management, pharmacy, sciences that create a true environment in enabling the students achieve the State and National goals in diverse ambits.

Today, the country focuses on national programmes like Digital India, Swachha Bharat and Start Up and Skill Development, etc. The curriculum and the infrastructure of BPUT provide a conducive platform for its stakeholders to participate and contribute significantly in these national missions.

The quest of the State and the country for quality University education continues and therefore as we expand all universities and colleges, elaborate and efficient internal quality assurance mechanisms must be put in place to ensure compliance with standards set by the regulatory bodies. The industry should also be involved as key

stakeholders in reviewing or developing new curriculum so as to meet aspirations of the employer.

As our graduates get into a globally competitive job market, the universities need to benchmark, collaborate and partner with other top universities in the world. This will result in internationally recognized programmes relevant to local and globally competitive job market. Our efforts should be to develop courses that would equip students with entrepreneurial skills so that on completion of their studies, they can start their own businesses and also create employment opportunities for others. The university should endeavour to produce job creators and not job seekers!

Former U.S. President John F. Kennedy said and I quote, "Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, if fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation. Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. The human mind is our fundamental resource." To enhance quality of education, deliberate efforts are being made and as Chancellor, I have been particular on imparting quality technical education to our students.

Research has been a key component of our studies. I would like to insist that even as the University undertakes research, it should be charting out a bigger direction for innovation and knowledge transfer through establishment of an incubation centre. The University should also establish a Science Park, to act as a critical link for end users, providing opportunity for continuous pursuits for solving critical societal problems through extension and other outreach activities.

The Government is keen in supporting Public Private Partnerships by universities. Given the limited resources BPUT should explore the Private-Public Partnerships opportunities to attract investors in order to supplement the government effort in development of infrastructure.

Dear students, I would say that you have worked hard to get to this point – studying, practicing, labs, tests, homework, and now you

are equipped to launch your careers in different fields of engineering and technology. You have everything you need to be successful in this exciting moment in time.

You may wonder why is this such a great time, and why is high tech such a great industry? The answer is quite simple. Technology has never reached or impacted as many people as it does today. We have over 900 million monthly active users on Facebook. There are 340 million tweets per day. 6.1 trillion SMS text messages a year. And this is changing everything – the way we interact, shop, learn, bank, heal, stay healthy, entertain, and live.

I have been deeply moved seeing how technology now improves people's life. Technology makes people now feel truly empowered, when they use their cell phones to fight social issues in social media. Women activists use Twitter to fight for equal rights for women. It is quite a common place to find hard-working fathers utilize their savings for purchase of computers so that the children may have a better education and better life.

We are living in a very special time – your technology careers are in this special time and everything is getting so exciting. With all forms of connectivity, computing power, consumer-orientation, it is a time when we will see technology change all aspects of our world. Over a decade ago, the digital communications industry was just beginning. Looking back many of us really had no way of knowing what to expect. But the world and the industry changed so much so many times – there was no way one could have anticipated all that happened.

It is innovation that is thriving everywhere. Innovation is always chaotic. People may laugh at you or disapprove. But always believe in yourself and in the power of technology to change the world. Don't get stale – become part of the new things. Don't be afraid to join in. The culture is open to new entrants. Invest your knowledge. Learn as much as you can about the emerging trends and stay ahead.

You have reached this stage in your life for your passion with technology. I am sure your passion and hard work will propel you

forward. Seek out jobs and ideas that resonate with you. If you love environmental causes, look for opportunities in Green industry. Do what you love. It doesn't mean that every job is a perfect match but make it a stepping stone to what you really want to do.

This is your time and use it for not only having a job but following your heart and living your dreams. There could never be a better time, you couldn't be in a better place, and all you need is the courage to try, willingness to accept your failures, the ability to celebrate your successes and the humility to ask for help.

Life is unpredictable; there is nothing you can do about that – you are just not in control of everything. But you are in control of how you react to the unpredictability of life. So my mantra for this generation is embrace change, dream big, and pursue innovation. I urge upon you to embrace it. You are walking into the most exciting time in technology history. You are standing at the epicenter. Everything you need, all the tools you already own. Take action. Go forth, and if you can help make other people's dreams come true, yours will come true as well.

Let all of you find wisdom in these great words, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country". Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi said and I quote "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." (Unquote) So ask yourself what you can do for the State and the country and be the change you want to see as you step into building your own future and serving the motherland.

I urge upon our graduating students to uphold the ethical values acquired from this University, make use of the entrepreneurial skills to establish enterprises and be good ambassadors of this university. May I wish you good luck in all your future endeavours. I also wish BPUT to be rated as a leading University in the country for scientific and technological studies, industry driven curricula, skill and quality research.

Jai Hind.

27th Convocation of Sambalpur University

I am delighted to preside over the 27th Convocation of Sambalpur University to the great delight of all the stakeholders of this University. Convocation is the most delightful academic ceremony in a university calendar and it affirms the centrality of its academic mission. It is the most awaited occasion for our young men and women as they receive their cherished degrees on successful completion of studies.

On this solemn occasion I am happy to extend a warm welcome to our Chief Guest, Dr. B.K. Das, who heads the unit of DRDO's Integrated Test Range at Chandipur. I wish Dr. Das, a well-known scientist having notable contribution to Indian Missile Programme would continue to lead the country in transforming it to a technology superpower. I am sure his address today must have enlightened young minds as they enter a new phase in life and empower them to become a potent force in building the nation. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the proud recipients of Doctorate Honoris Causa and wish they will continue to inspire the younger generation with their dedication and devotion to their respective field of specialisation.

There is an old Indian proverb that says: "Yesterday is but a dream, tomorrow but a vision. But today well lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day." Today is a day all about our young men and women, as it should be. It is hard-earned and also well-deserved. The day signifies great hope and promise for the state, the nation and the world as our young men and women holding degrees on hands set out to leave their mark and contribute their part for development of Odisha and India through the knowledge gained here.

I feel happy to congratulate today's graduates, awardees and medal winners on their success and achievement. This is a very proud moment and marks the culmination of hard work and sacrifice, both on

the part of the graduates, and also family and friends who have provided support throughout this period. Dear students, it is a joy to be sharing such a memorable occasion with you. Each one of you has gained so much from the University. Gaining education is in fact a significant stepping stone and it is also something that can never be taken away from you. Education provides with many opportunities and opens many doors. As you would be striving for success you must always remember that success is more synonymous with state of mind. So find satisfaction with what you are doing and look forward to facing every new day with optimism. Identify your strengths and always be true to yourself.

I would urge upon you to use your youth, as a true force for good and then follow that passion wherever it can take you. My hope for each of you is that you make choices based upon your passions, and that those choices lead to positive changes in your world and our world. I wish you to be passionate about doing the right thing, about following your dream, about evolving and growing and contributing to your state, nation and the world at large. And as you walk out of here, it is time to express your gratitude towards all those who made it happen and made your lives so fruitful in the campus.

Sambalpur University has done yeoman's service to the development of this part of the State in academic terms, building human resource and knowledge base. Catering to the academic needs of over ninety thousand students in two hundred and six colleges scattered all over the western region of Odisha is indeed an onerous responsibility, which this University has discharged admirably well. It is heartening that the University is accredited with 'A' Grade and has the highest CGPA (Cumulative Grade Points Average) score in Odisha. I take this opportunity to congratulate the academic community of Sambalpur University on this glorious achievement, which is well-timed, since it is going to celebrate its Golden Jubilee in January 2017.

It is well recognized that for any institution of higher education to be viable and competitive it must keep inclusion, equity, diversity and

justice at the "core of the academic mission and institutional functioning." A culture of excellence should be reflected in all the activities performed by every stakeholder from teachers, students, scholars to staff. Here it should be noted with pain and discomfort that no Indian University figures in the top 200 Universities at the global level in global ratings by different agencies. It is a pity that we have the largest higher education system in the world but we fall short of parameters for World Class University. To compete with the best universities of the world is a challenge before us and for that we need to work hard for excellence in quality performance on all the dimensions. The quality of academic output greatly depends upon the quality of input and the process. While it is important to address the existing shortcomings in our learning system, it is more important to move towards a bold and aspirational vision. In our quest towards achieving very purpose of existence of our institutions and creating world class institutions of higher learning we need to bring reforms and scale new heights in academic expansion, excellence and innovation.

World class institutions are research-intensive. They focus on research publications, teaching learning processes and infrastructure. Collaborative researches with international partners will play a major role in strengthening our position on global landscape. I note that the University awards PhD degree to 118 scholars for the year 2015 and 2016 during this convocation. It is believed that the number of PhD's produced is an important indicator of a country's intellectual capital. The numbers have shown steady increase but at the same time quality is to be ensured for finding solutions to several problems of local, national and global importance. We must nurture spirit of innovation in young minds and encourage them to research activity and to aspire of becoming an innovator to tackle challenges. It is said, 'innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower'. Therefore, research must occupy the centre-stage in the intellectually stimulating environment of our universities. Research and teaching are inseparable. For an academic, teaching brings enormous satisfaction

but research is an activity that fuels creative energy and enriches the intellectual life of a university.

I am happy to note that Sambalpur University has set up a Sponsored Research and Industrial Consultancy Cell (SRIC Cell) in order to explore the possibilities of collaborative research with industries and reputed universities in India and abroad. Running scholars' exchange programmes, signing of MOUs, mobilizing resources through research projects for building up laboratory infrastructure, subscription to various e-books and e-journals consortia, strengthening the e-governance mechanism, and adapting internal quality assurance measures are also some other laudable pedagogic practices Sambalpur University has lately adopted. These hold great promises for the future.

Regarding teaching-learning processes our focus and endeavour must be on quality driven innovative, realistic and result oriented teaching-learning processes. We must commit ourselves to a level of academic excellence, I mean building a purposeful academic community in which students and faculty share learning goals and the classroom is seen as a place where the community begins and where teachers not only transmit information but also create the common ground of intellectual commitment. They must stimulate active, not passive learning in the classroom, encourage students to be creative, not conforming and inspire them to go on learning long after university days are over. It goes without saying that the quality of teaching determines the quality of our universities. Therefore efforts must be made not only to attract the best talent to the teaching profession but to retain them.

Dear students, you are graduating and about to set forth on a fresh journey—a journey into "the real world." You have reached the grand crossroad of your career. You must now face the world that lies ahead of you, a world with many challenges. A future that is uncertain, unknown and untold. You will have to make your way with confidence adopting a positive and constructive approach towards the dynamics of the future and build a successful future. You must have the

imagination to think something different, and the guts to take those thoughts to their execution. It is your creativity, knowledge and spirit of innovation that will bring the difference and make you the winner. You are in a world where knowledge and skills are becoming crucial to be successful, employable and stay ahead of others. Rapid technological changes have changed the nature, contents, and types of skills that industry demands. Therefore, it is very much needed to reform our education system so as to upgrade the skills of our youth.

India is a younger nation with a youthful population. More than 50 percent is below 25 years. Future belongs to youth. You belong to youth of the country. You have the power, energy and enthusiasm to bring a positive change. Swami Vivekananda has rightly said, "Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life, think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body be full of that idea and just leave other idea alone. This is the way to success." I am sure these words will energise our young men and women in realising their potential and to assume greater responsibility in making Odisha and India developed.

Sambalpur University, during the span of half a century has functioned as a beacon light of knowledge and engaged in catalyzing social transformation and promoting the ideals of humanism. As the University embarks on its academic mission, I would like all: students, faculty, and administration to strive for excellence by doing even better what they do well. I wish our students every success in their pursuit of happiness. May God bless you to become good citizens and wonderful human beings. I also wish Sambalpur University all success in its endeavours and it scales new heights in days ahead.

Jai Hind.

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Jai Hind.

3rd Convocation of Sri Sri University

I am indeed delighted to be here in this beautiful campus of Sri Sri University today for the Third Convocation of the University and deliver the Convocation address. Let me thank the President, Vice-Chancellor and others for inviting me to this splendid academic ceremony and celebrate the success and achievements of our young men and women.

This University founded by revered Sri Sri Ravi Shankar ji is unique in many ways from its very concept to the setting of this sprawling campus away from the hustle and bustle of urban life that wears a cosmopolitan look with students from across the country and abroad to introduction of a number of pivotal courses seeking blending of ancient wisdom of East with the best of Western innovation. I am particularly impressed with non-conventional courses system for campus teaching to promote interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary studies. The University has enormous abilities and potentialities to be recognised as a premier institution of its kind in the world. I strongly believe that such institutions lay foundation for the economic, social and spiritual development of the State and the Country.

I compliment Padma Vibhushan Sri Sri Ravi Shankar ji for his vision and mission to establish such an important and lively centre of learning here in Odisha. His Art of Living Foundation has been doing commendable work around the world touching lives of people from different diversities and walks of life with its service to humanity and spirituality. I am greatly impressed the way he has dedicated himself and is devoted to bringing transformation at personal and social level. The world now appreciates India for its phenomenal rise as a fast growing economy and promotion of its age-old wisdom and ancient healthy practices of yoga and meditation for global wellbeing. I personally feel that India is diverse and it has so much to contribute to the world. I am sure it is through personalities like Sri Sri Ravi Shankar ji and through young men and women to whom he always

inspired with words 'Broaden the vision and Deepen the roots' and guided by such wonderful personalities India will contribute to the world in all fronts and soon become the superpower in technology, economy and spiritualism.

It is heartening that Sri Sri University during this short span of four years has grown significantly and acquired recognition as it imbibes in its students the spirit- 'Join to Learn, Develop Leadership and Leave to Serve'. Today the University is proud to send another batch of young men and women equipped with knowledge and spirit to enable them compete well in a real world they are about to face. On this memorable day I congratulate all the students graduating today, the PhD awardees and also those who have received medals for their scholastic achievement and share their joy and happiness.

I take this opportunity of your convocation to share my thoughts with you. Dear graduating students, you are now entering a crucial phase of your life, transmitting from studentship to responsible citizens. It is obvious that the process of formal study to acquire degrees from the university will end once, but your learning process will not end at any point and should go on. Every day every situation is going to teach you something new. You will realise that every day brings challenges to face, obstacles to overcome and opportunities to grab.

All of you have been awarded the testimonial of knowledge which you have acquired on this beautiful campus under the watchful eyes of your faculties. The challenge now lies on how you use your acquired knowledge to create intellectual wealth and welfare for you and in your chosen profession.

I fully appreciate the sense of satisfaction and sense of achievement that each one of you is experiencing today. You must feel elated to have access to unique educational experience in this University. From early times to the present age of knowledge society knowledge is regarded highly. Knowledge now has power to drive development and prosperity. It is the knowledge that will enable you to succeed in your life and career. On embarking a new phase of life

which is exciting and challenging our graduating young men and women are required to develop the ability to transmit their knowledge to understand life in wider perspective. I would like to urge upon them to consider it as their bounden duty to strive for the welfare of the society by harnessing the power of knowledge and believing the whole world as one family.

I understand that your University offers a number of courses at different levels, under-graduate, post-graduate and doctoral studies. You have disciplines like Management and Commerce, you also have a number of specialised Programmes on Naturopathy and Yogic Science, Performing Arts and I am told that several innovative and professional courses are in the pipeline and the University is in an expansion mode to reach out to more students of Odisha and beyond. The endeavour of the University in taking up a number of activities under its Community Empowerment initiatives and enabling students to take up service projects deserves commendation.

I am happy that the University attaches importance to research. The application and impact of academic research on our daily lives continues apace. The truth is that we can't really begin to imagine what the world will be like in next 30 years or so. We know it will be fundamentally different from today; and we can be sure that it will be different because of science, technology and innovation which will almost certainly start out in the university research environment. It is always exciting to arrive at a new conclusion, a new finding and to know the unknown. As Albert Einstein once remarked and I quote, "If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?" (Unquote)

It is important to nurture a spirit of innovation in young minds and encourage them to research activity and to aspire of becoming an innovator to tackle challenges of local, national and global. It is said, 'innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower'. So, research must occupy centre-stage in the intellectually stimulating environment of our universities. In fact research and teaching are inseparable. The PhD awardees of this University, I am sure will set

the trend for more number of scholars to follow them and they will lead to exciting and new findings to the delight of their faculty, university and the nation at large.

In a constantly changing environment and a highly competitive world, having required life skills is important to meet the challenges of everyday life and have a successful future. The dramatic changes in global economies over the past years have been matched with the transformation in technology and these are all impacting on education, the workplace and our home life. To cope with the increasing pace and change of modern life, students need new skills such as the ability to deal with stress and frustration and meet the needs of industry. Today's students will have many new jobs over the course of their lives, with associated pressures and the need for flexibility. The more we develop life skills individually, the more these affect and benefit the world in which we live: Recognising cultural awareness and citizenship makes international cooperation easier, Respecting diversity allows creativity and imagination to flourish and in developing a more tolerant society, Developing negotiation skills, the ability to network and empathise can help to build resolutions rather than resentments.

Our great country is home to a rich tradition of arts and culture. The State of Odisha has its unique lineage in performing and visual art. It is strongly believed that it is our responsibility to preserve this rich culture and heritage, the knowledge and expertise and to pass it on to future generations so that they may benefit and promote it. Sri Sri University has onerous responsibility to preserve the wealth of our heritage by grooming new generation custodians and ambassadors to take it to more and more people to appreciate the grace, beauty and significance of these art forms and practices. Regarding our rich and ancient wisdom and practice of yoga and meditation, I see a key role for the University to bring to focus its value by creating contemporary relevance to people in their everyday lives.

Institutions of higher learning embody our present and enduring connections to one other. They bring disparate talents and capacities to the pursuit of common purpose. At the same time, they

link to both what has come before and what will follow. They are repositories of values — values that precede, transcend, and outlast the self. They challenge students to look beyond the immediate, the instantly gratifying, to think about the bigger picture, the longer run, the larger whole. They remind them that they are stewards entrusted with the past and responsible to the future. It is for them to rise to the occasion and leave a mark in the sands of time.

With these words, I wish our students joy, strength, energy ever fresh and bright future as they set out on another exciting intellectual journey. I wish Sri Sri University all success in its endeavours to impart holistic and value-integrated education.

Jai Hind.

Valedictory Function of International Seminar on Universal Quality Education

I am indeed delighted to address you at this valedictory function of this important International Seminar organized on 'Universal Quality Education'. I am thankful to the organizers, the BJB Autonomous College for having invited me and I am happy to see so many of you here caring about quality education for all with special focus on underprivileged children.

This premier College of the State deserves commendation for setting the stage for such an important discussion, a discussion that has the potential to transform education. I am told that over the last two days, the distinguished delegates have had deep insights into several issues of universal quality education and the core theme 'Inclusiveness of Underprivileged Children in Quality Education'. You have discussed issues that in one way or another affects educational delivery. The exercise and deliberations not only tracks the progress made towards the goals but also highlights experiences in different parts of the country and the globe as well as the lessons learnt in the process and challenges that remain to be addressed.

I see participation from different countries and from different parts of India. It is essential that we focus our efforts on universal access to education and retention of children in all the segments from primary level to university. How to do this and what is to be done constitute the most important points of deliberation across nations, cultures and languages.

It is a critically important task, this focus on universal quality education — one that grows more important each day as our global society becomes increasingly complex and interconnected. For many of you, it has been a lifelong task, one I am sure you have been very proud to pursue in your own regions.

It is an open acknowledgment that for any individual or nation to prosper, children must be adequately prepared to contribute to the

workforce, to foster their own economic and social well-being, and to tend to the well-being and needs of others. Among all the areas where our governments utilise the resources, education affords us both the ability to generate resources and the wisdom to apply those resources where they are most needed.

Really, I can't think of a more appropriate description of what we are all here to accomplish at this seminar or of a more vivid illustration of the spirit of the learning-outcomes work in which you are all involved. This brainstorming excites all of us because of its implications for millions of students and for the bright future that we all want to see them build.

Education is a means to empower. You educate one generation and others follow. The world community has adopted the new universally applicable Sustainable Development Goals as part of the UN Agenda 2030. It can be underlined that education is a key component of that effort to create socially, economically and environmentally sustainable societies.

India has added its own resolve to focus on quality education and to understand whether children's achievements are improving over time in an equitable manner. Providing free and compulsory education to all children is a goal that has been affirmed by successive Governments. This, indeed, is also the focus of the World Declaration on 'Education for All', adopted over 25 years ago, at Jomtien in Thailand. India, undoubtedly, has made substantial progress towards achieving 'Education for All' goals during the last two decades. Adoption of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), 2009 has given further impetus to the national efforts for ensuring quality education for all in a time- bound manner. Mid Day Meal programme caters to millions of children daily and aims to help retention.

Our experience shows that the quality of education is ensured when all the different stakeholders take care of their own responsibilities. The role of the national level authorities in educational field is to coordinate with the States and support the programmes being

implemented through different institutions. The dialogue between experts at national and local levels should be holistic. We also need highly trained and motivated teachers.

Besides Government efforts, several non government organisations are working to provide quality education to the underprivileged children poor children, children of slums and deprived children. Work to achieve this goal is taken up in diverse ambits and we have to accelerate with our determination and commitment. Monitoring and evaluation are integral aspects of all our programmes. The reason is two-fold: firstly, to ensure that we can measure the impact and secondly, to make changes in the strategy and model to increase efficacy based on the assessment.

Education is a right, and millions of children today are not receiving this right. To better understand why so many children are missing out on their right to quality education will require a better understanding of the complexity of the barriers hindering children's access to education. Analysis of the obstacles and constraints faced by children who are out of school and not receiving an education is essential for a better understanding of the issue and its complexity.

Children are the future of a nation. For a country like ours, proper nourishment of underprivileged children holds the key to the progress of the nation itself. We are enabling young India to fulfill its potential and while doing so we have to take special care of the environment where it thrives. Education for underprivileged children is the key when we address healthcare, poverty, population control, unemployment or human rights issues. India's underprivileged children who account for around one-third of total population deserve more attention to their interests.

By ensuring quality education, one is assured of children's right for a better life. Education has to be of high quality and available to all on an equal basis. Inclusiveness means that everyone – all girls and boys, have an equal right and opportunities to take part in education and to receive the support they need for learning. The future

is built upon knowledge acquired through quality education. It is the most effective way to influence a young country than anything else.

As an overall principle, inclusive education should guide all education policies and practices, starting from the fact that education is a basic human right and the foundation of a just and equal society. It is central to the achievement of high quality education and the development of more inclusive societies.

Inclusive education requires reconstructing the cultures, structures, practices and methodologies used in schools and colleges. An inclusive school offers opportunities and possibilities for a range of working methods and individual treatment to ensure that no child is excluded. This implies the development of right-based and child-friendly schools which are not only academically successful but also healthy and protective of all children, gender-responsive and encourages the participation of the students and their families and their communities.

Today there is a critical need of skill development from a young age to create ideal workforce in the 21st century. In the changing world scenario with regard to industry and the job market, there is now an overpowering need for skilled workers. At school level, there must be options available for skill development courses and they must be provided in the secondary stage of schooling. The pedagogy has to be practical. To make India the skill capital of the world, the school curricula will have to go through a dynamic change.

Here I would like to emphasise the onerous need for inculcating a spirit of inquiry and scientific temper in children from an early age. The concept of scientific temper was articulated first by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in 1946 in his book Discovery of India, referring to it as "a way of life, a process of thinking, a method of acting and associating with our fellowmen". Therefore, schools must take keen interest to nurture a spirit of inquiry and the acceptance of the right to question in students that will ultimately lead to fostering scientific temper among the students.

Amid all these we cannot neglect to the values of our age old moral teachings. Holistic development of an individual is incomplete if moral values are neglected. Education must focus on the all round development of a child because moral values help in making complete human beings not just individuals. Children are our future. The future depends upon the moral values imparted to them during their school life. Moral lessons should be properly nurtured in them in schools and colleges. The curricula may include the study of biographies of great personalities who followed the right path in life. It will prepare students for their future role.

Our rural education initiatives must focus on setting up temples of learning radiating knowledge, moral values, skill and excellence to develop underprivileged children into confident, employable and responsible citizens of tomorrow.

We have to ensure that all children are enrolled in the education system. Their learning is to be facilitated by multi-professional teamwork of education, health and social sector professionals. They have to co-operate closely to assist students and they provide support even for families.

Our educators, teachers, academicians and communities all have to contribute unstintingly to this massive national endeavor of reaching the goals of universal quality education and inclusiveness of underprivileged children in the country. I would like you to work hard and achieve the best results. We have to motivate teachers to have the greatest responsibility in classrooms to educate children – a whole new generation for whom it will be a joyful learning. Let us work to achieve our goal both quantitatively as well as qualitatively through various interventions. Let us join together in our mission to change the world for our children.

With these words, I once again express my happiness for being here on this great venture.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of Conference of Vice-Chancellors at Raj Bhavan, Bhubaneswar

I am happy to address this Conference of Vice-Chancellors today. Let me at the outset extend a warm welcome to you all.

As Chancellor, I feel passionate to talk about the vital needs of curbing campus indiscipline, ensuring a study atmosphere, promoting quality education and fostering research in our universities. I am very clear that when I talk about contributing to raising the standard of our universities I mean it in the widest possible sense.

Our universities are confronting many pressures and expectations. What is now needed is total commitment for the sake of the university by all the stakeholders. At the same time, we need to revaluate our understanding of and approach to teaching and learning. We should try to concentrate on innovation, relevance, and applicability and to develop skills related to employability. This is a call for action, to think seriously about what we are doing, to value research and to ensure that our institutional policies and practices are well aligned with our priorities.

Odisha now has as many as fifteen State Universities besides Triple IT which is now a Unitary University. We have four new universities. This forum of Conference of Vice-Chancellors offers an excellent opportunity for the valuable exchange among academia, university administration and concerned departments. I have been holding informal meetings with Vice-Chancellors from time to time and the feedbacks have helped me to gain first-hand knowledge and taking appropriate remedies/reforms for our universities to function effectively in a globalized and interconnected world. While we are confronted with a diverse range of complex problems in this ever-changing world, we are also provided with ample opportunities for collaboration within and beyond national boundaries to brighten our

prospects. This Conference of Vice-Chancellors has continued to provide a platform for universities to share their insights on how to support human resource development.

It is quite necessary to recognise that the role of faculties is the most important factor in fostering excellence. It is strongly believed that quality teaching is important to professional practice and that universities should continue to support teaching development. I have been insisting on filling up of teaching posts in different universities on priority basis. The conference will surely deliberate at length on this matter.

Teaching and research constitute the centrality of learning and primacy of knowledge in a university. Almost all rankings use both these as benchmarks for assessing the quality of universities. The weightage given to research tends to be more in the rankings of universities recognising the importance of research. Our universities ought to become fertile avenues for the generation of ideas through research and publications. Rigorous research in all fields is critical to the state and the country as it will be expected to respond to new problems for which old solutions and perspectives may not be helpful. Research produces knowledge that gives clarity on the basis of informed and deeper understanding of the issues involved.

Let me shift to another challenge before us, before the universities that is to prepare our students to face challenges in the real world, in a global setting. It is more important for our students to be able to learn on their own, become flexible and creative as well as ready to take on responsibility. Skills and Knowledge need to be updated every now and then to enhance their employability prospects. Partnership with the industry and business sector would help not only in bringing in new ideas and thinking, but could also allow students to learn about the practical side of things.

With parents and students, I am also equally disturbed and concerned about violence on university campuses. These warrant our immediate consideration. What matters is the safety and peace of mind of the students, faculty and staff. What matters is the sanctity of

education and the campus and the notion that university is an open and safe place for learning and intellectual growth, not a battle ground or safety hazard. We have to be strict that all persons on the campus, whether administrators, faculty, students or employees, are subject to the law and the regulations of the university.

Our aspiration to establish to build world class universities is built on a strong foundation that has an inspiring vision and a mission to fulfil that vision. It depends upon our commitment to create and nurture transformational institutions that will inspire young minds with the spirit of enquiry and instill in them the flame of imagination.

However, universities do not become world-class institutions as soon as they are created but evolve to become world-class universities through years of hard work pursued by the commitment and dedication of students, faculty and staff. Leadership is central not only for providing an institutional vision that will garner and galvanise academic consciousness among faculty and students to fulfil the goals and aspirations of the university but also to reflect on the larger role and responsibilities of universities that connect them with the professions, government, inter-governmental organisations and think tanks. Leadership is also about taking responsibility and being accountable for one's decisions. The existing model of governance of our university system has to recognise leadership in universities as a critical aspect of building world-class institutions of excellence. I expect such kind of leadership from our Vice-Chancellors.

This Conference of Vice-Chancellors has provided an excellent platform for us to exchange our views and experience in the provision of higher education for the young generation. I wish for the continued and collective effort in making this conference meaningful. Finally, I look forward to a very fruitful exchange of ideas as the conference proceeds and discussions held on agenda points.

Jai Hind.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL THEMES

16th Indian Cooperative Congress

It is a matter of great privilege for me to be with you in this afternoon at the inauguration of the 16th Indian Cooperative Congress organised by National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI). I am thankful to the organisers for giving me this opportunity to associate myself with this highest forum of the Indian Cooperative Congress.

I am given to understand that the Indian Cooperative Congress is organised to deliberate on various trends in the cooperative movement and provide important feedbacks for formulation of policies. The Indian Cooperative Congress in the past has taken number of important decisions to revitalize the cooperative movement in the country.

The theme of the 16th Indian Cooperative Congress is "Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World." Considering the enormous potential and wide reach of cooperative enterprises, I have no doubt that they can build a better world. But to achieve the full potential and reach it is very much necessary to study minutely various factors affecting cooperatives in present circumstances.

Cooperative movement is active in different parts of the world and we have several glowing examples of flourishing cooperative enterprises. In India, we have also our own success stories of cooperatives and these successful ventures are torch bearers of cooperative movement in our country. But on the other hand there are others who failed mostly because of poor management and various other reasons. It does not mean that cooperatives are a failed venture. Cooperatives have played a pivotal role in fostering economic development of our country through the process of Five Year Plans. Long back the Cooperative Planning Commission observed in its report in 1946 "The Cooperative Society has an important role to play as the most suitable medium for the democratization of economic planning of provides the local units which can fulfill the dual function of educating the public opinion in favour of a plan and of executing."

Over the years, cooperatives have contributed significantly to the economic well-being of the country in the farm, non-farm and service sectors nurturing the dreams of millions of farmers, women, poor as well as working section of the society. It has always been the endeavour of the cooperative movement to alleviate poverty and improve the socio-economic condition of the weaker sections of the society. Today's concept of self-help group is nothing but an extended form of cooperative principle.

Odisha is one of the pioneering states in the advancement of the Cooperative Movement. The first Cooperative Society in Odisha was organised in 1898 under the dynamic leadership of Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das at Cuttak that is much earlier to the enactment of the "The Credit Cooperative Societies Act of India, 1904.

The Cooperative Credit Sector has taken the leadership in promotion and credit linkages of Self Help Groups, in general and Women Self Help Groups in particular ensuring empowerment of members.

Odisha is predominantly an agrarian economy. Mere provision of Credit is not enough. Marketing of Agricultural Produces of farmers at remunerative prices is most important for sustainability of farmers. The Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) in Odisha have played a crucial role in paddy procurement and ensuring payment of minimum support prices.

With a view to strengthening infrastructure and augmenting storage space to facilitate procurement of agriculture produces of farmers, godowns have been constructed at PACS level with the financial assistance of the Government of India under Rashtriya Krushi Vikas Yojana.

Cooperatives have taken the leadership in implementing National Agriculture Insurance Scheme in Odisha for the benefit of farmers. Frequent and unpredictable visit of natural calamities are bringing untold miseries to the farming communities in the State. Compensation paid to farmers under crop insurance helps sustain the crop loss. Odisha is one of the pioneering states in implementing the

recommendations of Vaidyanathan Committee for revitalization of Short Term Credit Cooperative Structure.

Odisha has taken up another pioneering initiative in empowering the farmers of the State by launching digital mandies and distribution of mobile phone set to farmers. This would help farmers to know the prevailing prices of agricultural produces in different mandies and prevent distress sale.

In the national context, the Second Green Revolution can be successful with the proactive role of Cooperatives in tackling the declining share of agriculture in the growth process. It is imperative that the Cooperatives should address to the pressing issues like development of professional managements, adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) application in all spheres of development and dedicated service to members. Adoption of new technologies and converting challenges into opportunities would enable Cooperatives to contribute to the balanced economic development through the Second Green Revolution. Cooperatives can play an important role in the implementation of the financial inclusion and brining about inclusive growth through its network and clientele base. The long cherished desire of each access to financial services can only be provided by the Cooperative network.

Cooperatives are member-centric organisations. Every cooperative exists to serve its members. With greater participation, Commitment and coordination coupled with dynamic leadership, effective planning and fiscal discipline cooperatives are sure to emerge as strong, viable and truly pro-poor institutions in the present scenario and live up to the faith entrusted on them by the people.

The Indian Cooperative Congress which is the highest forum of Indian Cooperative Movement will certainly look into these aspects and play key role in strengthening cooperative movement.

With these few words, I have great pleasure in addressing this august forum and wish very fruitful and productive deliberations at the Indian Cooperative Congress. I wish it all success.

Jai Hind.

Celebration of National Voters Day

It gives me immense pleasure to present Elector's Photo Identity Card (EPIC) to our young first time voters in this state level function organized here on the occasion of the 4th National Voters Day. As you all are aware, National Voters Day is observed to commemorate the formation of the Election Commission of India on January 25, 1950. Observance of National Voters Day is surely a commendable initiative by the Commission to spread awareness of voters as regards their inalienable right to vote, enhance their enrolment in the Electoral Roll and their participation in the electoral process.

As part of the observance of the National Voters Day, rallies and awareness campaign for voters are being held across the State and the Nation. Our newly enrolled young voters are just distributed with the cherished Voters I-Card and a badge with the slogan "Proud to be a voter-Ready to vote" and they are also administered the Voters Pledge. I understand that the winners in different competitions including quiz, slogan writing, poster making that were held earlier are awarded with prizes today. I congratulate our first time voters on being enrolled as voters of India, the largest and vibrant democracy of the world. I am sure, this will give the youth a sense of citizenship, pride and also inspire them to come forward to exercise their franchise as and when occasion comes.

Due to intense awareness campaigns undertaken by the Election Commission of India, there is surely an improvement in enrolment of voters and voting percentage. Further, women voters often surge ahead of their male counterparts in several booths, which is a good sign for the democratic health of the country. As per the latest figures available as far as Odisha is concerned, 4.27 lakh male and 4.56 lakh female are added as new electors during the recently concluded Special Electoral Roll Revision programme and most

importantly names of about 4.08 lakh electors were deleted from the Electoral Roll on legitimate ground. I congratulate the CEO and the entire team engaged in this massive enumeration process for their dedicated effort.

The main objective, certainly, is to have more participation of voters and ensure transparency in the election process, and at the same time weed out fake voters and those with more than one identity, and make the entire process free and fair in letter and spirit. I understand that the Commission is examining the proposal for introducing e-voter slips or mobile voter slips in the coming 16th general elections for the Lok Sabha in place of conventional paper slips used during elections carrying all the relevant details similar to the paper voter slips.

It is quite heartening that an effective campaign has been initiated to enroll more and more eligible citizens as voters with special attention on women and youth. Assistance of print and electronic media may be taken for awareness among the voters and increasing polling percentage.

India is a democratic republic and we are going to celebrate our 65th Republic Day tomorrow. We, as a republic, have completed 64 years and Constitution of India has been the governing principle of the country for over six decades. We, the citizens of India continue to persist with our democratic tradition that has certainly become rooted in our way of thinking. Successfully holding elections and reaffirming our faith on democracy is no mean an achievement.

Elections form the base of any democratic set up and if the electoral process becomes inconsistent and maligned, the whole edifice of democracy will get infected and crumble. Right to vote, who are above 18 years of age is ensured to the citizens of India. The Constituent Assembly was of the view that democratic government on the basis of adult franchise alone could "bring enlightenment and promote the well-being, the standard of life, the comfort and decent living of the common man."

The democratic ideal of "One man, One vote" has been guaranteed by Indian Constitution to all the voters and the right to

franchise involving voters, giving them equal opportunity to cast their vote, is indeed a huge task. It is heartening that Election Commission of India steadfastly accepts the challenge despite enormous difficulties and conducts elections in a free and fair manner at regular intervals. Use of technology has brought tremendous improvements in electoral process. Electoral rolls are now computerized, voters now have Voter Identity Card and results are declared in a single day.

The theme for the 4th National Voters Day is "General Elections 2014 with the sub-theme Ethical Voting". Ethics deals with morals or the principles of morality; pertains to right and wrong in conduct. Democracy is a wonderful thing in that each of us has a voice. But it is ruinous if people vote thoughtlessly or abstain from voting. Voting intelligently and responsibly is not about trying to get something. It is about showing respect to constitution and democracy by electing responsible representatives who are instrumental in governance of the polity. Responsible Government presupposes responsible citizens, and right to vote assumes much significance during the time of elections. As general elections are round the corner the responsibility of the citizens to cast their votes in a free and fair manner is of vital importance. We have moral obligations in regard to electing our representatives without fear as per the dictates of our conscience. Inclusion of the concept of 'None of the above' in the final list of the contesting candidates is quite a revolutionary step adopted by Election Commission of India and goes a long way in ethical voting by the voters as the right to reject all the contesting candidates may cleanse the system of the undesirable elements.

India is a young country with over 55 percent of the population below the age of 25. They are the future and strength of the nation. They have in them youthful vigour and spirit. To involve the youth in shaping the destiny of the Nation, Government had taken a revolutionary step in lowering the voting age from 21 years to 18 years for larger participation of youth and accordingly the Constitution was amended in 1988. Since then many young men and women were enrolled as voters and are exercising their voting right. But it is seen

that still a significant number of eligible voters are yet to be enrolled in the electoral rolls in spite of the annual revision exercise undertaken every year. Therefore our emphasis should continue to be focused on voter's education so as to make lasting impression on the mind and attitude of our young men and women.

I am sure the observance of the day will give the citizens a sense of empowerment, pride and self worth and inspire them to exercise their franchise. I appeal to the youth to remember the solemn pledge they took and act accordingly to pursue and protect democracy by taking part in the elections and vote without any prejudice for a good and strong government. I appeal to every citizen to participate in elections and ensure that those who are elected are people of high integrity. We should rise above caste, creed and religion and other biased factors while voting and elect people who can really represent the society. The young generation should remember that they have more responsibility on their shoulder as it is their future which is at stake.

Let the observance of National Voters Day highlight the values of electoral democracy and the issues relating to popular participation in elections. With these words, I once again congratulate all the voters present on this occasion and wish that the celebration achieves all success in meeting the lofty objectives.

Jai Hind.

Regional Rajbhasa Conference for Eastern and North-Eastern Regions

I am happy to be in your midst today at this Regional Rajbhasa Conference for Eastern and North-Eastern Regions and Award Presentation Ceremony being held in the Temple City of Bhubaneswar by the Department of Official Language in Ministry of Home affairs. At the outset, I extend my good wishes to the organizers and all the delegates participating in this Conference.

In order to achieve national unity and integration in the face of the linguistic and cultural diversity, the founding fathers of our Constitution had identified Hindi as the Official Language of the Indian Union. Constituent Assembly of India had adopted Hindi as the official language of Independent India on 14th September, 1949. The purposes for which Hindi alone is to be used, the purposes for which both Hindi and English are to be used and the purposes for which English language is to be used, have been specified in the Official Languages Act, 1963 later amended in 1967, the Official Language Rules, 1976 which were also amended in 1987, 2007 and 2011 and appropriate directions were issued under them from time to time by the Department of Official Language.

According to the Official Language Act, all Central Government communications have to be made simultaneously available both in Hindi and English, as English continues to be the associate official language. Accordingly, the bulk of official business is initiated and conducted in Hindi and English.

It has been the policy of the Government of India that progressive use of Hindi in the official work should be ensured through persuasion, incentive and goodwill. I am happy that the Department of Official Language ever since it was set up in June, 1975 as an independent Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs has been making efforts for accelerating the progressive use of Hindi in Deva Nagari script for the official purposes of the

Union and implements the Official Language Policy in letter and spirit. It is making guidelines and is regularly organizing programmes and activities including training courses as integral parts of the Policy for progressive and increasing use of Hindi in Central Government Offices as well as PSUs in the entire nation. Besides this, awards are also given for outstanding achievements in promoting the Official Language Policy and various competitions are conducted to create awareness and interest towards Hindi amongst employees. I congratulate today's awardees and I am sure they will be inspiration for others.

I am told that this Regional Conference is part of that endeavour to have information on the progress of implementation of the Policy in the Eastern as well as North Eastern Region and also to get suggestive measures for rectifying the shortcomings found in its implementation. Here, I would like to say that I am aware of the efforts of the members of TOLIC (Town Official Language Implementation Committee), Dimapur for wide publicity and implementation of the Policy in my home State Nagaland.

Capacity building at all levels in various areas like Hindi language, Hindi typing, Hindi shorthand and use of information technological tools applied for Hindi is a key area. Therefore workshops need to be regularly organized for officials and staff to familiarize them more with the official language. I am told that under the Hindi Teaching Scheme facilities are provided for learning Hindi Language, Hindi Shorthand and Hindi typing.

Today, we are living in a computer age. The language has to be made more computer-friendly to increase its acceptance and use. In the mean time Microsoft Company has included Indian languages in their latest versions of Microsoft Office-Word and also Windows – 2000. It is heartening that the Department of Official Language with the help of C-DAC, Pune has developed "Mantra-Rajbhasha Software" for online instant translation from English to Hindi on computer for documents of various domains of Official work through Internet. It is benefiting in two ways.

It makes work disposal faster and one also gets official document in Hindi and the quality of translation work done by it has been improved. Initially designed to professionally help the Central Government employees engaged in the task of translation it now subsequently benefits the entire non-English speaking masses.

I am further told that another software named "LILA" has already been made available for online learning of different Hindi courses free of cost by Internet through different regional languages and English as well. "E-Mahashabdakosh" is another software and it is primarily an online bilingual-bidirectional Hindi-English pronunciation dictionary. All these are surely commendable achievements. Therefore all the computers in the offices should be installed with these key softwares to work in Hindi comfortably and fast.

The Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi talked about love for people and respect for their mother tongue but not at the cost of ignoring Hindi. That is also echoed by our Constitution. This language has done a tremendous job in the freedom movement of India. Hindi literature has a glorious history and rich tradition. Considering the high degree of diversity, given so many different languages, I think there has to be a common bond. And Hindi as the official language of India would bring about that common bond. Hindi has importance in national unity and integration. So do respect regional languages but be enthusiastic towards promotion of Rajbhasa Hindi, the Official Language. It is understood that about forty percent of the total population of our country use Hindi for their daily use which is the third largest spoken language in the world. Let us be committed for dissemination and development of Hindi.

I take this opportunity to urge all concerned to implement Hindi incentive schemes introduced by the Government in their respective offices and at the same time implement policies regarding publicity and implementation of the Official Language Policy with sincerity.

I would urge the Department to provide right direction for the progressive use of Official Language of our country as enshrined in the Constitution with an intensive and comprehensive programme for accelerating the spread and development of Rajbhasha Hindi, which has flourished a lot since independence. With these words, I have great pleasure to be with you and wish the Department of Official Language all success in its future endeavours

Jai Hind.

Indo-Korea Educational & Cultural Forum

I am delighted to be with you all today in Seoul, the capital city of South Korea and address the Indo-Korea Educational and Cultural Forum which is an Indo-Korea initiative being organized jointly by Global Scholarship Foundation, Seoul and KIIT University, Odisha in India. Situated on the Han River, the city proudly boasts of a history of more than 2,000 years. A miraculous economic transformation raised Seoul from the ashes of the Korean War and made if the world's fourth largest metropolitan economy. The metropolis exerts a major influence on global affairs as one of the five leading hosts of global conferences. Seoul is considered a favoured venue for international sporting events and has it hosted mega sporting events like the 1986 Asian Games, 1988 Summer Olympics and 2002 FIFA World Cup successfully. Further, Seoul plays a meaningful role in fostering bilateral relations between the two countries. Let me at the outset extend my hearty good wishes and convey a greeting of peace from the people of Odisha and India.

I understand that heads of academic institutions, Vice-Chancellors and CEOs of corporate houses are participating in the Indo-Korea Educational and Cultural Forum. I congratulate the organizers for their novel venture as events like these provide valuable opportunities for meaningful interaction and exchange of perspectives. I am sure the Forum can create enormous opportunities for India and South Korea in the field of education and culture and unfold another glorious chapter in bilateral relations.

The cultures of many Asian countries have a long and rich history and are famous for their diversity and inclusiveness. Over thousands of years, people in the region have travelled, traded and intermingled, and this process continues even today.

India and South Korea are both blessed with a rich history and a splendid culture, which are several centuries old. Legend has it that an Indian princess from Ayodhya in north India married the illustrious King Kim Suro, founder of the ancient Korean Kingdom of Karack, in

the first century AD. Thereafter people built cultural bridges and forged ties that have endured and thrived over the centuries.

As we all know, Buddhism flourished in the lap of India and spread everywhere, especially in the East Asian countries. Lord Buddha's abiding message of peace resonates among the people of India and Korea. India is regarded as their spiritual home by Buddhists in Korea. The travelogue written by the respected Korean monk Hye-cho, Pilgrimage to Five Kingdoms of India gave us a valuable insight into the India of the 8th century. Nobel Laureate Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's prophetic poem, 'Lamp of the East', pays a rich tribute to Korea's glorious past and its bright future. The following excerpt of the poem illustrates it. I quote,

" .... in the golden age of Asia,
Korea was one of its lamp bearers,
And that lamp is waiting,
To be lighted once again,
For the illumination of the East."

I am of the view that there is a natural empathy between our two countries, as both suffered the terrible anguish caused by colonialism. India and South Korea share a strategic partnership and values of democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human dignity binds our people together.

I am indeed overwhelmed finding incredible stories of Korean affection for India, our culture, and our values. One such features Dr. Kim Yang Shik, the President of the Tagore Society, who was conferred the Padmashree award for her excellent translation of Gurudev Tagore's works into Korean. The Indian Art Museum that she has established here in Seoul, housing her personal collection of artefacts from India selected over fifty years, can be justly described as an amazing act of friendship and love towards India.

It is true that the more we interact and collaborate, the more we are able to appreciate the beauty and sophistication of each others' cultures and further build deeper friendship and understanding among

our people. Cultural exchange and co-operation will take us to new heights and help us flourish further.

The people of my country fondly recall Her Excellency the President of South Korea's successful landmark visit to India early this year in her very first year in office. This indicates the country's commitment to taking the mutually advantageous relationship between India and South Korea to a new level of understanding and co-operation. Further, she had promised to build a nation that 'becomes happier through culture', and to foster a 'new cultural renaissance'.

Inspite of the multifold thrusts of globalization and economic liberalization, South Korea has preserved its millenia-old tradition and culture. Various features of Korea's deep-rooted culture, tangible and intangible, pervade every corner of Korean society even today.

Ours is a country which is famous for its rich diversity - diversity in language, culture, tradition, dress and our uniqueness consists in unity in diversity. Our culture is a thousands of years old. We, in India, are highly committed to promoting regional cultural co-operation and exchange and we are actively engaged in different forms of cultural exchange across a wide spectrum.

The two countries celebrated the year 2011 as the 'Year of Korea in India' and 'Year of India in Korea' in each others' countries showcasing the varied and inspiring cultures and traditions and the enchanting arts of India and South Korea. This has helped the wider population to learn more about and appreciate these age-old traditions and practices. The reciprocal establishment of Cultural Centers in our capitals is another good decision aimed at expanding our people-to-people exchanges and elevating mutual understanding and friendship to a higher level.

It is good to note that there are museums in India and South Korea which devote resources to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage. We welcome stronger links between the museums of both the countries to safeguard their cultural heritage and enhance public understanding.

We must adopt a multi-pronged approach to protect, nurture and promote sublime facets of cultural richness. This includes in-depth research, education, promotion, application for inscription and transmission. Apart from financial and human resources provided by the Government, organisations like this Forum should be encouraged to participate and support cultural exchanges as part of our concerted effort to preserve the rich cultural heritage.

Globalisation and technological development are changing the landscape of higher education and posing challenges to which we need to respond with a sense of urgency. The international dimension of higher education now figures prominently on the policy agenda in India as well as in South Korea, the aim of which is to promote academic mobility and global cooperation between higher education institutions and thereby improve the quality of higher education.

While academic mobility is obviously a key component of any internationalisation strategy, there is also a need to encourage more partnerships in higher education, not least with institutions in other countries. This will help to increase international outreach and visibility, as well as enhance teaching and research capacities, and promote a more active role of the universities in knowledge transfer.

If we are to remain highly attractive destinations for internationally mobile students, as well as valued partners for academic cooperation, we must intensify our efforts to promote global awareness of the quality and the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of the universities.

It is fair to say that higher education institutions in South Korea clearly enjoy advantage on internationalization as the country allows foreign students to study in large numbers. They have a rich and diverse experience in developing international curricula and joint degrees, in fostering international education, research and innovation projects. We in India are not lagging behind but more work needs to be done. I am aware that Hanseo University has tied up with KIIT University in a student-exchange programme in a number of areas and the outcome has been quite impressive.

In today's digital era, many academic institutions have gradually connected with one another to build global networks. This situation stems from the technological revolution in communications, developments in the sciences, as well as the very nature of knowledge, which now operates via accumulation and paradigm shifts. Interaction with students and faculty broadens their perspectives greatly. It also enables both sides to learn from each others' experience and strengthen links and strategic collaboration that supports the development of national higher education and enhances excellence in teaching, learning and research.

Three major trends are shaping education and research at a worldwide level (a) Increase in international mobility, which is giving rise to new modes of competition within higher education and research; (b) Economic competition, which is now playing a key role in higher education and research; and (c) Competition amongst academic and research institutions, which is impacting on their concentration, diversification and modernisation.

The world is now more complex, more connected and changing more rapidly. Change is inevitable and here to stay. One of the important roles of universities has been to make some of these changes possible. Exploring new trends and new facets of higher education and research has assumed added significance in the globalized world of the twenty-first century. We know that a significant proportion of our good work was made possible by the research performed in universities and through the actions of people who were drawing on the benefits of their university education.

Higher education is becoming more and more global, open and competitive. The demand for high skills is growing, and higher education – with its links to research and innovation – has a crucial role to play in equipping students with such skills for our growth and prosperity. Collaboration in education sectors opens opportunities to exchange ideas, information, skills and technologies and initiate take up scientific and technological endeavors of mutual interest, establish joint research programmes to advance common goals.

As the Chancellor of Universities in Odisha, I sincerely desire that more areas of collaboration need to be explored and I use this platform to make an appeal to heads of educational institutions and Vice Chancellors who are very knowledgeable persons to provide strong leadership and vision to make universities as places where new ideas germinate and bear fruit through genuine and mutually beneficial collaborations among our universities for the larger interest of both the countries. I am sure that students, teachers, researchers and institutions will make the most of the available opportunity from various exchange programmes.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to discuss how we can strengthen cooperation between universities in India and South Korea with field of higher education. We share many challenges in higher education and there is no doubt that we can learn from each other as we adapt our systems to the changing needs of the modern world and we will ultimately benefit from this.

Friends, our Government attaches great importance to our relations with South Korea and we are glad that they have in recent years become multi-dimensional. We are also glad to see the recent expansion in cultural, academic and other people-to-people exchanges between our two countries. Educational and cultural partnerships are a dynamic and exciting approach to global citizenship. I am sure India and South Korea will walk miles together to create a partnership that will enrich the lives of millions of students and faculties and also the people of both countries. I see a larger and definite role for academic institutions and corporate houses in this noble endeavour. I sincerely hope that this Forum will continue to work hard to promote exchange of ideas and experience in education and culture in coming days. Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, I cordially invite you to visit Odisha and explore the splendour and potential of this fascinating land.

With these words, I wish you all very fruitful discussions at the Forum and also wish all success to the endeavours of the organisers.

Jai Hind.

Celebration of World Environment Day

I am happy to be in your midst this morning for the observance of World Environment Day. As you are well aware, 5th of June is observed every year round the globe as World Environment Day at the initiative of United Nations. The observance began in 1972 and has grown to become one of the main vehicles through which the UN stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and encourages attention and action. Considering the serious implication of awareness UN has rightly put protection of environment as one of its Millennium Development Goals.

I commend the efforts of The Times of India Group, Bhubaneswar which I am told observes this day every year by organizing programmes in building awareness on environmental concerns and presents awards for good work done for protection of environment. Today's function is part of that effort where distinguished participants would share their views and experience on important issues concerning environment.

This annual event every year seeks to draw global attention on a particular theme. I understand that the global theme of the year is "Global Warming, Climate Change and Us." With growing need to realize the serious influence of global warming and climate change on flora and fauna and on all life forms, the theme selected is totally relevant and justified.

Challenges facing humanity on the environmental front have become truly global and pressing. It is increasingly realized that the human race stands at the crossroads when the dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation and depletion of resources. So, before we reach a point of no return, we must take tangible steps and follow the path that leads to sustainability of resources.

Decades ago when environment was not a buzzword like today, the Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi had said, "There is enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed". This is a

statement with profound social, philosophical and economic relevance. The way we are encroaching upon the environment with our development approaches and with consumerist culture and lifestyle, we on the other hand, are becoming responsible for causing environmental degradation. The frequent and erratic climate change emerges, of late, as one of the greatest threats to humanity in diverse spheres indeed of its very survival.

It is quite pertinent to note that climate change is a continuous process spread over millions of years. Then what makes climate change sound so different today? The world's scientists and environmentalists have concluded that mindless exploitation of natural resources now leads to climate change. Massive industrialization and urbanization cause significant emissions of Carbon Di-oxide, Methane and other greenhouse gases which are mainly responsible for global warming and climate change.

Global warming has cast its dark side on many aspects and depletion of ozone layer is certainly one of them. Today, there is widespread concern that the ozone layer is deteriorating due to the release of harmful gases such as CFCs (Chloro-Fluoro-Carbons) in the atmosphere by use of aerosols and various products that involve cooling. Such deterioration allows large amounts of ultraviolet B rays to reach Earth, which can cause skin cancer and cataracts in humans and harm animals as well. Already negative effects are experienced with people suffering from skin cancer. Besides this, hole in Ozone layer leads to release of excess heat in the atmosphere which is harmful for life. We know how much important Ozone layer is for us, the humans. It is still not too late till we realize the importance of the Ozone layer and avoid using products having CFCs.

Global warming leads to extreme weather events like flood, draught, cyclone, windstorm and hurricane. We need to address global warming by going to the root. We know that trees act as natural filters of our air. Trees have the biggest advantage of absorbing carbon dioxide which is a key greenhouse gas and principal contributor to global warming and supplying oxygen, which is badly needed for

survival of life forms. Tree planting and preserving is a collective responsibility and such effort deserves to be always encouraged and supported. The more we plant trees more clean will be our environment.

A change over is necessary from non-renewable and polluting energy systems to those that are renewable and non-polluting. Majority of today's pollution that causes generation of greenhouse gases and leads to change in global climate owes its origin primarily to use of non-renewable energy. In fact, choosing a good energy strategy is about choosing a good strategy for environment. So, if the energy options are right, then environmental aspects and more particularly the aspect of climate change will surely be taken care of. Adoption of solar energy is a better option, as it is non-polluting and perpetual. Time has come for the renewables to come into mainstream of energy and policy makers have to give a boost to this option in concrete form.

In other areas as well, a change over is needed from the present resource-intensive and pollution-prone technologies to environment friendly technologies where less resources including energy are used. The indicator of such technology is maximum output of usable product with the use of minimum energy and with minimum pollution. Eco-labelling of products has to become an integral part of technology and business. In doing this, we can be able to check the emission of carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and restrict their adverse effect. Safeguarding environment and development must go side by side and development should be sustainable and equitable and not at the cost of environment.

There is an urgent need for collective effort to tackle the hazards that arise from environment degradation. There has to be a voluntary curb on the part of every individual to restrict his / her ever growing wants. If we change as individuals then society will change. The choice is ours: care for environment or risking around destruction. Every one of us has to accept responsibility for the present and future well-being of the mankind and the larger living world.

We must value the overwhelming importance of nature and environment in this era of global warming. Environmentalists and Scientists have stressed the need to bring in changes the way we co-exist with environment. It is heartening that good work is being done by individuals, organizations and government to protect environment but more needs to be done. Issue of climate change demands a sense of urgency from all quarters. We need to renew our commitment for a clean and green environment where all life forms survive and live happily. Before time runs out let us act fast and sensibly for the present and for the future as well.

With these words, I have great pleasure being with you on the World Environment Day and wish the effort of Times of India Group all success.

Jai Hind.

59th Foundation Day Celebration of State Bank of India

It gives me immense pleasure to be in your midst on the 59th Foundation Day celebration of State Bank of India. On this momentous occasion I congratulate the SBI Parivar and also their family members who are here for today's celebration.

59 years ago, on July 1, 1955, by virtue of an Act of Parliament, Imperial Bank of India was christened as State Bank of India and since then, the day is being observed as State Bank Day. The bank, however, traces its ancestry to British India, through the Imperial Bank of India, to the founding, in 1806, of the Bank of Calcutta, making it the oldest commercial bank in the Indian Subcontinent. The first Five Year Plan of independent India launched in 1951 which aimed at serving the Indian economy in general and the rural sector of the country, in particular is an important turning point in the history of State Bank of India. Previously the commercial banks of the country, including the Imperial Bank of India confined their services to the urban sector.

With the passage of time, SBI blossomed into a mighty institution with a strong national and international presence and operations. This is an indication of the growth, rise and public faith with the bank. I find that after 59 years, the bank with its Associates known as SBI Group has over 22,000 branches at the service of the Nation and SBI has as many as 14 circles in the country. In Odisha it has now as many as 779 branches. I am told that it is enjoying a market share of 23% in the Indian domestic banking market. Besides India, SBI has more than 195 foreign offices in 36 foreign countries.

During its journey of 59 years, SBI has traversed a long way playing a pivotal role in developing India's rural sector by providing the financing needed to modernize the country's agricultural industry and allied sectors on which majority of population depend for livelihood, also for the development of the country's infrastructure, and

above all in shaping the country's economy. It has long been an arm of the Indian government's infrastructure, agricultural, and industrial development policies. The nationalization of the banking sector in 1969, however, gave SBI new prominence as the country's leading bank.

SBI has carved out a distinct identity for its excellence in banking. It has a glorious tradition of being pioneers in many respects. Today the bank has successfully utilized technology with all its branches computerized, ATMs at almost all locations, introduced Core Banking and has a strong network base with a multitude of services on offer to customers. SBI has taken several initiatives in the fields of financial inclusion and customer centric products and services. All these imply bank's continued commitment to customers and provide a sound foundation for the growth momentum that the vision envisages.

I find that the Bhubaneswar Circle of SBI was established in the year 1979 but much before to it in 1868 the first branch of erstwhile Bank of Madras which was later known as Imperial bank of India was opened at Berhampur. It is a matter of pride that the Bhubaneswar Circle has achieved a number of laurels in many areas of banking sector and recently added another feather to its cap by securing 4th Best position among 14 Circles of the Bank in the country.

I am particularly happy to note that the Bhubaneswar Circle on its 35th Foundation Day has made the occasion memorable by donating multi-purpose ambulance and by adopting 35 girl child belonging to poor families from various villages of Odisha. By doing so, it has gone a step further reiterating its commitment towards corporate social responsibility. I understand that Poor Girl Child Adoption is for the education of girl child and related expenses to make her stand on her own feet with head high with confidence and self respect.

Female literacy is a potent remedy against most of the ills affecting our society such as poverty, unemployment, backwardness and malnutrition. It is said that when we educate a boy we educate one

individual whereas when we educate a girl we educate a family. By this yardstick the SBI Bhubaneswar Circle has laid foundations for the bright future of 35 families.

This is commendable and this investment will yield rich dividends in future. I sincerely wish that more and more PSUs may follow this noble example of Bhubaneswar Circle and take similar pro-poor initiatives.

India is known as country of villages and the agriculture and allied activities are the backbone for the economic development of the country. In Odisha agriculture plays a significant role in the overall socio-economic fabric. Here SBI has a key role towards improving socio economic condition in the State. In view of government's emphasis on doubling the target of agricultural credit the bank has to ensure efficient delivery and responsive mechanisms.SBI being the first commercial bank to come up with financing to agriculture sector way back in late 1950s is seen with great expectation from the farming community. Given the present development in the State and all the prospects, it is necessary that State Bank of India, along with all other banks, participates with full commitment in the developmental and social work aimed at the growth of Odisha and upliftment of the poor and downtrodden. The prevailing situation in Odisha is both, a challenge and an opportunity, for the bankers to show their social responsibility by disbursing more and more consumption loan, farm loans, Kisan Credit Cards, general purposes credit cards to all poor and marginal farmers as well as rescheduling agricultural loan accounts. Similarly, there is an onerous need to expedite implementation of several government sponsored schemes for providing easy credit to the self employed, self help groups and small industries.

The Indian banking system has made phenomenal strides in the volume of its business and diversification of its activities particularly after nationalization in 1969. However, I would like to urge upon banks to adopt innovative methods to make them economically viable not compromising with proper outreach to the rural poor and priority sector. The initiatives of the policy makers and banks in this direction

will pave the way to achieve the long cherished dream of inclusive growth and to transform the rural India in a big way.

Foundation day celebrations have a great significance in the annals of an institution. It is an occasion to look back at the journey so far, the lessons learnt through the years and to synthesize a strategy to meet the emerging challenges of the future. Today is also an opportunity to rededicate to the pursuit of 'Excellence'. By excellence, I mean the intrinsic quality which surpasses the fleeting goals and transitory pursuits. Excellence in customer service is a benchmark that the bank will always strive to achieve. You may remind yourselves that you are unified by a common goal, serving the community and the nation at large.

The mission and vision can be achieved, I personally believe, only through cooperation and commitment from every member of the SBI family. Individuals can achieve success but together each achieves more success. It is this mantra of Team Work that will see SBI scale new heights of glory and continue to be a trusted name in the vast expanse of the country.

There is every scope for the growth. While immense opportunities for growth are there, the challenges are also equally overwhelming. SBI has to raise its bar to meet the challenges and capitalize on the emerging opportunities particularly in the field of retail banking. A constant challenge that remains is to identify newer risks and strengthen banking business to keep pace with the changes in technology. In bracing for tomorrow, SBI should reconsolidate its position in banking sector with constant upgradation and revalidation of bank's internal system and processes. To achieve this, both the management and the employees have to play jointly a vital role.

SBI's success lies in building effective partnerships and networking with all the agencies in the business of development which can enable the Bank to expand its outreach. Towards this end SBI, with its strong and efficient workforce, should facilitate organisational restructuring which would make the institution relevant.

To thrive, customers and customer service must be the priority sector for the Bank and it needs constant innovation. Customer satisfaction continues to be the hallmark of all business ventures and definitely the Banks are no exception to it. On this occasion, let me reiterate that the trust and confidence SBI has built during all these years and the laurels earned through unstinted commitment to customers have to be upheld and all concerned should strive to improve its reputation and performance.

In conclusion, I wish State Bank of India Bhubaneswar Circle more and more growth and commercial success with financial services of great value in its area of operations and active participation in the upliftment of the downtrodden in Odisha in days ahead. I also wish the girls adopted by the Bank to make best use of this opportunity to become educated and be responsible citizens of the country. I once again wish SBI Parivar all the very best for the future.

Jai Hind.

Valedictory Function of the launching ceremony of the Trust India Against Negativity

At the outset, let me extend my best wishes to all of you in the beginning of another festive season that has just begun with big celebrations of Lord Ganesh Puja the day before yesterday and Nuakhai on yesterday. The season, I understand, is a long one. My experience in Odisha during the one and half years that I have been here is that Odisha is a state of vibrant traditional and cultural festivals – a state where people spontaneously celebrate and most importantly, invite one and all, irrespective of caste, class, creed and religion to be a part of the festivities.

The other impression which I have regarding the state is that Mother Nature has endowed Odisha with so much of resources that it baffles one's imagination. Almost all varieties of minerals in plenty, abundant water resources, vast forests, long coast line, innumerable heritage sites and nearly 250 varieties of medicinal plant species are gifts from Nature and such abundance has always been the envy of others.

The people of the state are intelligent, intellectually disposed and academically inclined. The state also boasts of high quality academic institutions. Now, can anybody find any comprehensively satisfactory explanation as to why this state has remained economically backsword? This is a paradox that has evaded any justifiable answer and to me the real answer is hiding elsewhere. Intellectuals, sociologists, economists and those involved in public life since long should come together on a single forum to find out reasons behind this conundrum.

No one should think that there is no poverty elsewhere if there are such plentiful resources! We find poverty in African countries, we find poverty in Latin American Countries and we find poverty in many Asian countries and we also find poverty in different parts of India! Yet poverty in other continents has been caused by different reasons, namely internal conflicts, prolonged civil wars and different forms of governance that do not consider poverty as a focus area. However, all

these are irrelevant in Indian context. Poverty in different parts of India including Odisha is a strange phenomenon because here it is poverty amidst plenty. India is a good surplus nation and India's green as well as white revolution has been part of folklore yet poverty has been plaguing our society. After expenditure of huge amounts of fund and consumption of millions of man hour, poverty and its allied offshoots like malnutrition, bonded labour etc have been hindering the progress of our society on an equal footing that means ensuring equality and dignity for all.

Of course we know that there are a number of reasons for such a state of affair. Plan and policy makers with their ways of analysis, presenting data and statistics of inexplicable proportions have pinpointed on so many factors and re-planning and new policy making have started all over again. Yes- visible changes have occurred. Massive infrastructure building has transformed the landscape of India- bridges, roads, power plants, railway link, massive buildings, shopping malls, academic institutions, hospitals, medical and engineering colleges and what not. India, people said some years ago, is an emerging nation, now people say India has already emerged! In a strange travesty of fortunes, our competitor is neither America nor U.K. nor Russia, our competitors are now China and Japan and with the largest number of qualified human resource, many including me who as an optimist believe that soon India will catch up!

Against this backdrop, how can we explain massive corruption, exploitation of the weak, violation of human rights, encroachment on liberty and human dignity? Why do people in rural and tribal India and in slums continue to rot at the bottom of the economic ladder? Why do we find an India that is completely in sync with the latest fashion launching in Paris, Milan and Berlin and at the same time, an India that seems to have been stuck up in medieval times? One hour on any of our national highways will make any Indian proud because of the number of luxury cars speeding away! The next moment one feels gloomy and distressed because farmers in nearby villages are caught up in a vicious cycle of loan and distress sale of their yield! Daily newspapers and news

channels routinely report on theft, loot of public money, violence against children and women, corruption, nepotism and favourtism. Are we as a nation destined to suffer like this? Are we, as a people, active or passive participants of this? Greek philosopher Aristotle had said long ago, "Poverty is the parent of all revolution and crime!" Revolution, as we all know, is never possible in our society, but the other one, crime – has already eaten into our society. This crime does not necessarily imply killing somebody! Delaying the process of governance and time consuming tactics for delivery of benefits to the people are crimes. Delaying the file of a helpless poor man or delaying to treat a poor patient who comes to the hospital for treatment are crimes. In other words, harassing people and depriving them of their legitimate rights are crimes! Anyone anywhere indulges in any activity that deprives a helpless poor human being of his or her social, economic, legal or educational rights is committing a crime. American President Thomas Jefferson had once remarked, "The whole art of government is the art of being honest!"

All these point at a strange paradox. The more we have developed or advanced materially, the more we have given in to the negative forces of human nature! The flaws are not outward; the flaws – I reckon – are inside us! We make thousands of kilometres of highways, yet we make the lanes of our hearts very narrow; we make hundred-storied buildings, yet we stoop down to the lowest level offering or taking bribes while doing our duty for which we are dully paid; we make long bridges, yet we are short in many respects when it comes to virtues; we become – even at times without being conscious of it – materialistic filling our homes with all items of luxury, yet we shut the doors of our heart to human misery and plight! Such is human nature. Let me quote here what Napoleon Bonaparte had said, "It is not true that men never change; they change for the worse, as well as for the better. It is not true that they are ungrateful; more often the benefactor rates his favours higher than their worth; and often too he does not allow for circumstances. If few men have the moral force to resist impulses, most

men carry within themselves the germs of virtues as well as of vices, of heroism as well as of cowardice. Such is human nature".

If our society still exists today and if we see examples of acts of virtue, compassion, honesty and truthfulness, we are sure – as Napoleon had said – that there are "few men having the moral force to resist impulses" – impulses of greed, jealousy, violence, lie, cruelty, parochialism and meanness. These are negative forces and lie within us. And we are capable of defeating these, yet we do not.

This discourse has brought us to a point where we know powerful forces – basically negative in nature – have hindered the growth of humaneness in us. Ranging from politics to sport, economic activity to implementation of welfare schemes and discharging public duty to scientific endeavours, these negative forces have narrowed our vision, hindered our growth as human beings, spurred us into harming others and propelled us to be intolerant towards fellow human beings! Now contrast this with what our heritage and scriptures tell us: the world should be treated as if it is a single family or thou shall not do unto others what thou do not want to be done to thyself or truth shall prevail or honesty is the best policy or service to others is service to God! Humans have propagated these high morals and values. Yet it is they who practice the opposite. Whatever good we see, it is due to "few men having the moral force!"

So, negativity is the root cause of almost all evil. And if some children ask us or some youths ask us what is negativity, how do we explain? Had it been something associated with the material world, we would certainly have been able to show; but like virtues, all vices.-i.e.- all negative forces are inside us! It is in our mind, in our heart and in our soul!

This particular syndrome, more psychological and attitude-centric, is what we can call negativity. Persons overwhelmed by negativity, when approached by people for some works, begin their reply in the negative, like say, 'This cannot be done' or 'rules do not permit me to do this' or 'you have to wait for some days' or 'this record/ file is missing, hence I cannot help' etc!. It seems as if inertia has

gripped the system with negativity. And believe me; the common man is fed up with this attitude and mindset. Nobody politely says 'yes – I am here to help you'. Forget about people in power and position. The disease has become so common that even the common people have developed a negative mindset. People are weighing everything in the scale of selfishness and personal gain! Even if somebody is crying on the road after facing an accident, people normally turn their heads away and go. If thatched houses have been damaged by a storm, people are not even prepared to repair themselves, they wait for the Government agencies to arrive! A visit to any of the Scandinavian countries opens our eyes to what people can do for themselves and for the society at large. The system works so efficiently that the presence of the Government is almost invisible. That is what a positive mindset or attitude can do! Everyone does his or her duty honourably, in a dignified way and with due respect to law of the land and being honest. Ask not what the country can do for you but ask what you can do for the country.

Negativity in India is not an old syndrome. Those who had participated in the freedom struggle were people of immense integrity and dedication and honesty. They were positive in their thinking and were optimistic that Indian society would emerge as a dreamland which Gandhiji called 'Ram Rajya' Alas, that dream was short lived. Soon things degenerated. As greed and materialism spread its all-encompassing tentacles, negativity or negativism blinded our conscience, so much so that we fail to see the suffering and plight of millions – forget millions, we fail to see our neighbour's suffering and plight. How can a society call itself enlightened or civilized if we are beset with negativity? And we have to remember that material progress or scientific advancement does not lead us enlightenment. At best, they may become two/three steps in our journey upwards to enlightenment, the other more important steps are care, concern, love, affection, compassion, help, truthfulness and mutual cooperation. The basic question we must ask: why should somebody else suffer or lead a life of misery because of me or my action? However, negativity has strangulated the voice of conscience and we consider our existence to be

superior, but we are mistaken. Ancient scriptures available in different society and faiths have not only urged us to be compassionate to human beings, they urge us to be compassionate to animals and trees and rivers and environment. From the Vedas to the Bible and from Buddha to Mahatma Gandhi, scriptures and great men have urged us to be positive, or cultivate optimism and shun negativity. To be compassionate to other organic and inorganic beings is perhaps the noblest from of act of a positivist, and living for own self is perhaps negativity exhibited at its worst! Unless we fight against negativity and unless we counter it by actions of sheer optimism, we as a nation and as a civilization are not going the right way, because negativity will invariably lead to more corruption, dishonesty, chaos, law and order situation, suffering for the poor, misery for the helpless and violation of rights. Can we leave our nation or our state or our society to suffer like this?

The answer is an emphatic NO.

Another dimension to negativity is that of the media devoting hundreds of news hours or millions of columns to matters which neither have importance nor relevance in state or national context. Some Government functionary or people's representative makes some comment somewhere; and media picks it up. Now what happens is that the concerned functionary or representative wastes days and months explaining why he said what he said. The media by that time would have spent valuable time. To me, this is also negativity. There are so many issues in the country and there are so many problems of the common man to be solved or crying for attention for news space that no time or no column should be wasted on trivial incidents or comments! Examples are aplenty. My humble advice is that when we talk of shunning of negativity, it implies that no valuable time of the nation or the common people should be wasted. It passively means we are overlooking more important issues and focusing on less relevant ones. What I wish to say is that media is perhaps the best channel through which we can fight and defeat negativity; hence media should always be careful while selecting items for primetime.

And I am happy that the fight against 'Negativity' has begun from Odisha, through a Trust by Dr. Achyuta Samanta – the Founder of India Against Negativity (IAN). With him some of the best brains of Odisha have joined hands and I hope their collective efforts will go a long way in achieving the desired objectives. I am happy not because I am the Governor here, but since my joining here I have told about this mindset in a number of functions involving the state's universities.

My esteemed audience will recall that I started this address focusing on Odisha's resources – natural and human included – and Odisha's poverty. I have left it at that what a question that why is Odisha poor inspite of her abundant resources? I had said it is a paradox that has baffled me and many others like me! The answer lies here – a negative mindset has hindered our progress – I mean our all-round progress. During the first few months of my joining, received hundreds of petitions/ letters – from people and organisations, but mostly from the academic community – and, almost all of them were negative in nature! Somebody trying to nail some others, some allegations, trying to stop one's promotion, stop salary, seeking suspension or termination of service and likewise! I did not receive a single letter suggesting something positive, either for improvement of the institution or welfare of a friend or a colleague or a staff!!

I am happy that IAN has been launched and I am sure it will enable us to identify our negativity and inspire us on the path of optimism which will ultimately result in achieving its objectives, which I think are fifteen in number.

Even if a little percentage of the population are inspired by the movement, I am sure, the society as a whole will be a different place to live in.

Hence, let us strive to ensure that positivity is the guiding sprit of our lives at every juncture and shun negativity in all its manifestations so that our country registers progress in diverse ambits.

Jai Hind.

Mother Teresa Memorial International Award for Social Justice

While conveying to you my thanks and gratitude for having invited me to such a ceremony, I feel humbled and honoured, because the two words 'Mother Teresa' have become synonymous with the best of human virtues. That all the virtues – love, care, compassion, tolerance, concern and forgiveness – found expression in one individual – a frail woman – is enough to make us realize our limitations; nay – rather pointing out to us in a subtle way to look inwards and ponder over our intentional way of remaining passive to the suffering of others. The actions of Mother Teresa remind us of the fact that what we as individuals could have achieved!

Anes Gonxha Bojaxhu – later known as Mother Teresa was born more than a century ago on August 26, 1910, in former Yugoslavia, in a catholic family. At an early age itself, Agnes wanted to become a nun. At the age of eighteen, she joined a convent and later she was sent to India, first to Darjeeling and then to Calcutta (now Kolkata) to teach in a school there. The next seventeen years she led a sheltered life teaching history and geography. Then one day seeing the slums of the city, she was stunned and her heart rattled. This was the turning point in her life! The sight broke her heart and she decided what to do. In fact, the appalling misery in the slums had broken her heart and transformed her completely into a determined, dedicated, brave and relentless worker, a worker who served God through service to the suffering. The desire to alleviate the misery and suffering of the poor became stronger; and finally on September 10, 1937, during a journey to Darjeeling, she heard the voice of God telling her to go out and serve His abandoned children!

We all know how she began her journey and how she began her work with a school for slum children. Her first helper, a young Bengali girl, joined her in 1949. Since then thousands of volunteers had joined her and these women- clad in a blue-bordered white saree- came to be known as Missionaries of Charity. The city of Calcutta, the state of

West Bengal, India and finally the world recognized her contribution and people were stunned to see the monumental scale of her work and her love for humanity.

Mother, as she came to be known, soon established a home for diversification of her work, 'Nirmal Hriday', the home for the dying destitute. With time, she grew like a massive banyan tree, providing shade and shelter to many, transforming their lives, letting them feel that the human heart is not made of stone, rather it is full of love, care and compassion! Her work inspired thousands, lighting the candle of love in their hearts and inspiring them to work for the suffering, destitute and dying.

Praise, accolade, award and honour carried little meaning to Mother; what mattered most was service, perhaps the greatest of virtues. The spirit of service was born out of her infinite love for humanity. She was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1979 and the Bharat Ratna in 1980, drawing the attention of the world to her relentless pursuit to bring smiles on the face of millions. However, what these accolades achieved was that many came spontaneously as volunteers from different parts of the world to join 'Nirmal Hriday' and Missionaries of Charity. This is what Mother had said while accepting the Nobel peace prize-

"I choose the poverty of our poor people. But I am grateful to receive it (the Nobel) in the name of the hungry, the naked, the homeless, of the crippled, of the blind, of the lepers, of all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone."

Epitomizing kindness, service, care, love, dedication and compassion, Mother Teresa earned the sobriquet, "The Saint of the Gutters!" Yet, after she left for heavenly abode, the Catholic Church bestowed 'Sainthood' of her! This in a nutshell is the journey of a frail woman from simplicity to sainthood.

However, as we analyze her achievements; we are face to face with some bitter realities. Her achievements also ask a lot of questions

of all of us, mankind in general. Is mankind destined to suffer? Are strife and misery the forever companions of human race? And what are the ways of ridding our fellow human beings of misery? Who will, or for that matter, who should come forward to life people from the "gutters" of hatred, jealousy, misery, strife, gloom and suffering? That one frail woman could move millions of hearts and contributed in a great way to bringing love, peace, comfort and faith back in the lives of those in complete despair or losing their faith in humanity- is in itself an achievement bigger than some big discoveries and inventions; bigger because most of these have been cause of more misery! Material progress is all right and many discoveries and inventions have raised our comfort level and made society a much better place than what it was a century or two ago. New knowledge in the fields of medicine and agriculture, energy and infrastructure etc. has contributed immensely to socio-economic and human growth; yet new knowledge in certain fields has brought in more misery and strife. The challenge is we cannot afford to remain untouched by new knowledge and at the same time we also cannot be blind to human suffering! Concerned about human suffering elsewhere through war and conflict, she had written letters to both George Bush and Saddam Hussein in 1991, the content being the same, and I quote "'Please choose the way of peace... In the short term there may be winners and losers in this war that we all dread. But that never can, nor never will justify the suffering, pain and loss of life your weapons will cause"'. How do we find the correct balance between material progress and spiritual conviction that can ensure love for one another, peace in general, no misery caused by humans and a world where people are bound by strings of friendship, tolerance, faith and goodwill?

And then there is this big question: will man-made strife, misery, conflict, intolerance and war never end? Is human race condemned to endless suffering? Why has been it so- as the human race began its long journey since the stone age- strife and misery have always come back to haunt it? With the advancement of human civilization through different periods glorified by the age of

philosophy, the era of scientific progress, the era of industrial revolution, the era of knowledge explosion etc; it was expected that with knowledge will come emancipation, with wisdom will come redemption and with technology will come understanding and tolerance. Yet, here we are, in the twenty first century, witnessing unprecedented violation of human rights almost everywhere. The worst sufferers have been children and women. This particular tendency of inflicting pain on the helpless and vulnerable has been the hallmark of modern times and this has baffled seers, preachers, social scientists, psychoanalysts and many others! With pain in her soul, Mother Teresa had said this in Beirut in 1982 and quote,

"I have never been in a war before, but I have seen famine and death. I was asking (myself) what do they feel when they do this?

I don't understand it. They are all children of God. Why do they do it. I don't understand."

The wise would tell us that the most ancient of scriptures dates back to five thousand years and thereafter, with the majestic journey of the humans many other scriptures have been added. Thousands of interpretations have been made. Thousands of interpretations have been made. Thousands of preachers have enlightened our lives. Is it an eternal proposition that if 'good' (God) has to prevail and rule, then evil (Satan) has to be close by? In such a scenario, where is the role of an angel or a messiah or a saint or a seer? Organizations like Missionaries of Charity and people like Mother Teresa and our new Nobel Peace prize winner Kailash Satyarthi have not only transformed the lives of millions, but also have inspired many others in different parts of the world. Yet, the challenge seems to be monumental and at times, even the most optimistic of people sound pessimistic when they say that human nature is like that; that as long as humans will tread on this planet, there will be strife and suffering.

To me a born optimist, this is where philosophy, preaching and interpretation have failed to achieve their desired objectives, because the missing link has always been the humane touch – the human approach that could convince people of their goal in life, what they

need to do and what not to do, how they should conduct in society and what are their responsibilities! This is where a human being is faced with a number of options: good, evil, comfort, strife, greed, violence, truth and falsehood. Guiding people on the right path has always been a challenge, but not impossible. Action, I believe, is more powerful than words. What thousand words cannot achieve, a single act can. This has always been so and the journey of human civilizations has always been the story of great men setting big examples through their action. May be it is the other way round, that small acts of conviction have made people great!

Socrates in search of truth, Mahatma Buddha in search of the best and the most appropriate ways of living, Jesus in search of love and peace, Swami Vivekananda in search of spiritual awakening, Mahatma Gandhi in search of non-violence and equality, and Mother Teresa in her quest to transform misery and strife into happiness and love have endeavoured to inspire people through their actions; they and many others have been able to keep the lamps of value and virtue burning. Their actions are wake-up calls and we should look inward and try to conquer the evil in us! Over the ages, if millions could be inspired to carry forward the spirit of love, friendship, value, virtue, care and compassion, then it is also very much possible that millions more can do the same!

Bhima Bhoi, a tribal poet of Odisha, the state where I am now the Governor, had written this couplet more than a century ago. Let me quote it :-

"Boundless is the anguish and
Misery of the living,
Who can see it and bear?
Let my soul be condemned to Hell
But let the universe be redeemed."

These words, universal in nature, have come from a blind and illiterate tribal poet and this sums up what is the best in human nature. Whatever be one's social or spiritual status, the key lies in his/her soul and a desire that' I' would do no harm to others even if my own soul is

condemned to hell! This might sound a bit exaggerated. Yet the truth is that our civilization has survived tyrants, tormentors, criminals and mad rulers because simple individuals- never ever mentioned or heralded – have always made big sacrifices, at their own level. For thousands of years, this process has been going on. And for these acts of love, friendship, fellow feeling and compassion by common people living in rural and tribal areas and slums, we always need one Mother Teresa to inspire mankind. I consider it appropriate to quote here what Swami Vivekananda had said long ago, "If you really want to judge the character of a man, look not at his great performances. Even a fool may become a hero at one time or another; watch a man do his most common actions; those are indeed the things which will tell you the real character of a great man."

Now, as our civilization and society claim to be modern, we witness human suffering all around. We cannot wipe out people's overnight, but we have one Mother Teresa to inspire and guide. We should unite and reach out to people in distress, pain and suffering. When a few good people march ahead for a good cause, we should co-operate with them and strengthen their hands by contributing to the cause. The most tragic characteristic of modern times, our times, has been the non-involvement and non-cooperation of the majority in a noble cause. Martin Luther King, Jr had once observed:

"The greatest tragedy of social transition was not the strident clamour of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people."

With these words and with great hope that good people will not remain silent, I conclude my address by quoting Mother Teresa:

"I see God in every human being. When I wash the leper's wounds I feel I am nursing the Lord himself. Is it not a beautiful experience?"

Thanking you for having given me an opportunity to remember a person whose name illumines the soul.

Jai Hind.

Valedictory Function of the 67th All India Commerce Conference

I am delighted to address the august gathering on the valedictory function of the 67th All India Commerce Conference being organized by KIIT University under the auspices of Indian Commerce Association. I understand that this prestigious conference is being held in the State for the second time after 1982 in Ravenshaw College. I am told that the conference was attended by an overwhelming number of participants from across the country and more than one thousand research papers were submitted and presented during the conference. This is indeed very heartening and I congratulate the delegates for having come out with quality research based papers and for their active participation in the deliberations of the conference. I wish that the delegates might leave with a very pleasant memory of the conference.

The Indian Commerce Association, being the oldest professional body in the discipline having been established in 1947, the year of India's Independence, deserves all appreciation for its relentless efforts in making Commerce education qualitative and contemporary, matching to the needs of the customers in the dynamic national and international business environment. This prestigious conference is the platform where the elite Commerce teaching intelligentsia of the country get together to deliberate on various issues evolving in the context of Indian commerce and global business scenario. In the past it has forwarded its proceedings to the policy makers to initiate appropriate measures. I find that the present conference had four technical sessions besides an international seminar on Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability. In the era of globalization when the world has shrunk and becomes a global village many challenges crop up at regular basis and professional bodies like Indian Commerce Association should get prepared to welcome all such challenges and deliberate upon them in full measure.

I commend the Indian Commerce Association for having instituted an award and introducing merit scholarship. It is quite significant that it held a special session during this conference for the students of Commerce and Management with a view to encourage them in the field of research in Commerce and Management.

Of late, the business landscape scenario passes through a period of rapid srtides. The impact on the enterprise, the workplace and corporate real estate is significant as it changes our infrastructure needs.

Today's business world is evolving faster than ever before. Amplified by technology that is enabling the world to become smaller by means of the internet, nowadays businesses are forced to be more efficient, receptive, and innovative.

Service sector in India has come to the centre stage with its increasing contribution to GDP. Effective marketing of services constitute the core of service sector boom. India claims to be a young nation with large number of young human assets. Harnessing their potential through talent management and other Human Resource interventions are important in ensuring a sustainable growth path. Capital market efficiency is the barometer of economic weather of a nation and of late resurgence in the capital market has been witnessed leading India towards an investment destination. Our country has great prospects for insurance business as it is being affected perpetually by the vagaries of nature. I hope, the topics deliberated upon, are not only of contemporary importance, they are also beneficial to the common man. The proceedings of this conference would certainly enrich the existing knowledge base.

It is obvious that the growth in certain sectors and for a certain category of people cannot be sustained for a long period. The overall growth must also touch upon the people at the grass root level. The academicians should be able to bring out viable model so that the poorest of the poor gets his due from the economic growth.

My state Odisha and some other states like Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh etc. are rich in minerals and other natural resources but

most of the people are in abject poverty. As academic leaders and mentors to the students community in the field of commerce and business you have the onerous responsibility of inculcating creativity and innovativeness in the minds of the students so that they can be entrepreneurs. Further value addition to the minerals and other natural resources, profitable jobs to millions and sustainable growth for the sizable chunk of the country are quite imperative at this juncture.

The need for financial literacy and education has become even more acute. Besides, there is a general lack of awareness among the financially excluded population about the benefits of being connected to the formal financial system. Millions of people in this state have lost their hard earned savings due to their financial ignorance. This highlights the importance of the task of promoting financial literacy, which faces numerous challenges in a country like India, on account of wide disparities in literacy levels, social / economic development, widespread use of regional languages, etc. Recognizing the importance of financial literacy as the stepping stone towards financial inclusion, Reserve Bank has taken several steps in recent times for promoting financial literacy. This can never be successful without the support of and commitment of the academia.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944 proclaimed that "Poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere". It is universally agreed now that Financial Inclusion helps build domestic savings, bolster household, domestic and financial sector resilience and stimulate business and entrepreneurial activity, while exclusion leads to increasing inequality, impediments to growth and development. Thus, financial inclusion is an important tool for poverty alleviation as it not only connects individuals to the formal financial system, but also inculcates savings habit among them. The University and College teachers particularly of commerce faculty have to play a significant role in this connection.

I understand that there was an International Seminar on Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability during the present conference. In 1970, the economist and Nobel laureate Milton

Friedman published an article in The New York Times Magazine titled, "The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits." Since then times have changed. Many more have now made CSR a priority. The next generation of business leaders is even more likely to prioritize CSR. India has become the first country in the world to make CSR statutory with Section135 in the new "The Companies Act 2013". CSR is no more mere philanthropy, but a mandated obligation to ensure sustainability.

Today, after a period recession that has dented corporate profits and intensified pressure from shareholders, companies are devising new CSR models. Rather than staffing a modest CSR department — and slapping it on the org chart as a small offshoot of the public relations or philanthropy division — many companies are instead trying to embed CSR into their operations. That is indeed laudable.

I always look at the Commerce fraternity as an important partner in nation building and transforming the country. I am happy that Department of Commerce, Utkal University and KIIT University have made strategic alliance in making this endeavour of learning through sharing a successful one. I congratulate the organizers for their laudable and praiseworthy efforts.

Jai Hind.

68th Foundation Day Celebration of All India Radio, Cuttack

I am delighted to participate in the 68th Foundation day celebration of All India Radio, Cuttack. On this joyous occasion I congratulate the entire staff, artistes and others associated in various capacities with Cuttack radio station.

It is heartening to note that AIR, Cuttack is among the six major AIR established in the country soon after independence. Having started its long journey of 67 years till date from its inception on this very day in the year 1948 Cuttack radio centre has been playing a pivotal role in preserving and promoting Odisha's rich culture and tradition and making remarkable contribution in the development of the State. Over these years the Cuttack Centre has produced many eminent artistes who are counted as who's who in Odisha's cultural arena. It has been with the people at the time of both sorrow and joy as a true friend and a well wisher.

Finding something worth listening to on medium wave in the broadcasts of an All India Radio (AIR) station in any part of the country is always a cherished desire for those who love radio passionately.

In the global history of modern communications, radio grew as a unique technology that combines the use of sound with narrative without recourse to visual or graphic imagery. Every civilization was originally nourished by words. The great thing about the radio was that human voice covers long distances and thereby creates large communities of listeners.

The radio's characteristics as a medium redefined education, creating the possibility of learning long after childhood had passed. It opens up a new world of creative expression. It adds a new dimension to music and entertainment. As a medium of mass communication, radio finds a congenial climate in India's vast geography and varied cultural terrain and is nurtured on a sustained basis. Its role in bringing India together is fully appreciated, and it is before all to realise what all

it has accomplished in the socio-political and cultural spheres of the country. The same is with AIR Cuttack in Odisha where it has nurtured to be regarded as a best performing radio station at the national level. I congratulate the staff and the artistes for bringing laurels to AIR Cuttack.

Perceived primarily as an educative medium following independence, All India Radio became centres of intellectual and creative interaction. With basic technological aids, the early generation of producers was able to achieve a high standard of rigour and grace in a remarkable range of forms and subjects. Now with modern technology All India Radio must strive to further enhance its standard of programme and its reputation thereby. AIR remains an attractive platform to identify and nurture talented young people. I can share with you the fact that a stint with Akashvani made a palpable impact on the creative trajectory of a substantial number of major poets and writers of the post-independence generation. The same can be said of musicians and singers reaffirming AIR as a prime vehicle of dissemination of our rich cultural heritage.

It is nice that Prasar Bharati now have autonomy and it should be coupled with a matching increase in spirit and imagination to enhance radio services at the altar of market values. Direct To Home (DTH) services are helping to its cause to reach the listeners. However, a deeper examination is required to determine AIR's relationship with the people in the emerging social order.

Medium wave transmission is treated as a preserve of the rural listeners: those living in cities have the privilege of FM listening. FM broadcasts supposedly dedicated to young listeners are fully devoted to entertainment. As for AIR's rural audience, messages of Government like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan both in content and style, can have great impact about the importance of cleanliness. Flagship programmes like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan would achieve greater success with AIR because of its reach to a community in the extreme corner. As a national system of public education, AIR can play a vital role over the

coming years in the implementation of Right to Education. Debate and discussion in AIR continue to be of good quality and refined.

Advances in technology have given people more ways to access an increasing amount of information. Local and international news can be read in the newspaper, listened to on radio, watched on television and found on cell-phones or online. For those with access to these options, a wealth of information is always readily available. Amidst all these, radio continues to play an important role in information sharing and awareness building. To an extent, AIR has improved over the recent past, but with an imaginative policy and vision on all areas of social sector, especially education and health it would further consolidate its role in sensitisation of the general public. There is always space for improvement. The urge to excel and innovate should always be there to achieve new height in broadcasting.

A responsible citizen is the one who necessarily participates in the process of governance. Herein lies the importance of the role the media that is the fourth estate needs to play in a democracy such as ours. In terms of reach and access, India's print and broadcast media is strong : approximately 60% of urban Indians and 25%of rural Indians read print media on a regular basis, and 96% of the country is reached by radio which is mostly affordable.

It would definitely be feasible for people to connect with issues pertaining to their own neighbourhood broadcasted in their own native language. It provides a platform for the local people or groups to tell their own stories, share their experiences and thus become active contributors and participants of the media. This helps people to become creators of their own community specific media. In a way it also broadens their horizons of thinking and over time may even lead to a scenario where they will be increasingly aware of the national issues of importance. In many parts of the world, radio acts as a vehicle for the community and voluntary sector, civil society, agencies, NGOs & citizens to work in partnership to further community development programmes.

AIR Cuttack's coverage should continue to draw inspiration from its spirit and vision. Odisha is a state which is culturally and minerally rich but unfortunately it is economically backward. The State has immense potential and has possibilities and it is the wholehearted effort from the people that will drive the wheels of progress and prosperity. Here I see a larger role for radio to be the viable medium to energize and empower people particularly the youth to take the responsibility and emerge successful. I would urge upon AKIR Cuttack to strive for all these and remains at the forefront of regional broadcasting.

With these words, I wish AIR Cuttack to further glorify its existence, add new feathers to its cap and attain new heights in days ahead.

Jai Hind.

India & the Indian Ocean-Renewing the Maritime Trade & Civilisation Linkages

I am indeed delighted to be here for the valedictory session of the International Conference on "India & the Indian Ocean-Renewing the Maritime Trade & Civilisation Linkages" and address such an esteemed gathering of leading academic minds, international stakeholders and subject specialists gathered here for last two days to deliberate and reflect upon the key issue of maritime trade and civilization linkages in Indian Ocean. This conference couldn't have come at a better time than this one when it is being held on the close heels of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's recent visit to three countries in Indian Ocean Region - Seychelles, Mauritius and Sri Lanka. Hon'ble Prime Minister had repeatedly emphasized and said, "India, while defending its interests and safeguarding its mainland and islands, will equally work to 'ensure a safe, secure and stable' Indian Ocean Region." Further, Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of Blue Economy which seeks to harness India's huge potential in maritime trade and cooperation may find right avenues in such deliberations. At this backdrop and development, the conference is seen as a timely one to further consolidate India's vision and attached importance on Indian Ocean Region for peace, security, trade and stability through maritime cooperation and collective action.

It is heartening to note that despite formidable challenge to deliberate on an area of such diversity and vastness, Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS) and the co-organiser of this international conference, Research and Information System of Developing Countries (RIS) have made significant attempts towards facilitating trade linkages and investment network, and fostering economic integration. I congratulate them for their thoughtful endeavour.

Before coming to modern dynamics that talks a lot on support and regional cooperation in Indian Ocean Region, I must say that regional cooperation in Indian Ocean has quite ancient foundations.

For over 4,000 years, the Indian Ocean has been the centre of a thriving network of trade and people-to-people links which, for many centuries, gave the ocean and the region a distinct regional identity. The establishment of numerous colonies acted as catalyst for the rapid growth of trade and a network of maritime trade paths which linked the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and the western edge of the Pacific. The Ocean also provided a crossroad in the 15th century what is known as the Spice Routes, dramatically changing trade patterns at the time and thrusting itself in the annals of world history. It is not an exaggeration to state that this magnificent ocean, with over 4,000 years of heritage in facilitating the exchange of goods and the movement of people, provided an early template to international maritime trade and facilitated the foundations of globalized trade long before there was even a description for it.

Trade was primarily instrumental in spreading people, ideas and social customs throughout the Indian Ocean, leading to a cross-fertilization of cultures. It is strongly believed that prior to Europeans who arrived in the late fifteenth century, the economic, political and cultural world of the Indian Ocean was largely self-sustained and inter-woven. Merchant diasporas from South and South Eastern Asia were behind this development and Odia merchants played a significant role in furthering trade and commerce.

It is heartening that Odisha, earlier known as Kalinga and Utkal justifiably hosts this international conference. The glorious saga of the State which enjoyed flourishing record of maritime trade by sea-faring Odia merchants for centuries is well known. They sailed to south-east countries like Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Bali and numerous islands and became the ambassadors of Odisha's rich art, culture and tradition. Spread of Buddhism to modern Sri Lanka might be traced to that influence. Odisha's rich maritime history, trade links, migration and diaspora might have been deliberated in the conference. Odisha having a long coastline of 480 kms and being endowed with minerals and natural resources finds itself in a better position than other States to

take advantage of Government's Blue Economy initiatives for the development and welfare of the people of the State.

This conference has been attended by important Ministers of Union Government, State Government and delegates, scholars, researchers from different parts of India and abroad. I believe, the conference might have explored the scope for regional cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region on matters of environment, Blue Economy concept, capacity building, tourism, climate change, and the importance of people-to-people contact to strengthen social and cultural relation.

Exploiting the rich maritime wealth is fundamental to the nation's economic wellbeing. Development of Blue Economy holds great promise for the nation. The good thing about Blue Economy is that it never disturbs ecosystems and ensures sustainable development. Though the concept is still in making it is time to foresee the future and take steps at proper exploitation of resources in our oceans around our islands and our coasts for sustainable development both regionally and globally. Let me take the opportunity to highlight the need for co-operation to get more involved in research and new technology to exploit the vast ocean resources.

Occupying a strategic position Indian Ocean holds immense strategic value to a world ever dependent on hydrocarbon energy. The emergence of Indian Ocean maritime cooperation calls for a climate of trust and transparency; sensitivity to each other`s interests that will ultimately contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

We are aware of the shift of the global attention on Indian Ocean and resources to the Indian Ocean Region. The emergence of the global economy and the global market-place means that the Indian Ocean region manifests potential for growth in regional trade and interaction in a wide range of sectors and promises economic self-sufficiency and internal cohesion.

The scope for building linkages extends well beyond trade and investment. Things are, as we all know, of course, changing. The leaders of SAARC and ASEAN countries speak with a good deal of

conviction about the possibility of building meaningful regional cooperation. The new perspective aims at producing an environment of broader understanding of each other's viewpoints and of increase in people-to-people contact, through tourism, education and academic and cultural exchange. That sense - a feeling of identification with the region and its constituent cultures and people grows from the increased interaction. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India has said and I quote, "India seeks a future for Indian Ocean that lives up to the name of SAGAR – Security and Growth for All in the Region."

In today's fast-moving, ever-changing world, the Indian Ocean which is the world's third largest ocean covering an estimated one-fifth of the earth's water surface, offers a plethora of opportunities. This huge body of water provides an economic lifeline to many people residing in different developing countries. It is expected that the sea-lanes of the Indian Ocean will become even busier in the future as global maritime trade grows in size and importance. Maritime transport, as the most economical and effective means of transport to support international trade, will correspondingly see an increase in activities, and the Ocean, as a crucial trade waterway, will in tandem grow in prominence and significance. Increasing regional cooperation such as one initiated on the platform of this international conference will surely enable us to participate more actively and effectively in the overall development of blue economy.

Stunning diversity and disparity of the countries and inhabitants in the region, not to mention of the complexity and challenges of the issues they face demand a fresh outlook. Here I insist upon the need for creative thinking, new ideas and keenness to look at new ways of doing things while grounded on trust and cooperative approach.

The entire world's imminent future is likely to be very much focused on maximising the potential of the world's oceans. If the last 100 years was very much about how we could maximise the use of our land, this century is very much about making the most of our ocean. The Indian Ocean is at the crest of this wave, and with India's

leadership and commitment we can bring about a transformative change that we all believe in and aspire for.

The conference must have given a lot of ideas to unite our region in partnership and building a pathway of peace and prosperity overcoming various challenges. While appreciating such endeavour of organizing this kind of conference involving Ministries and international stakeholders I would like to stress upon in making it a regular feature and taking steps for converting the suggestions and findings into action and ultimately a reality.

An expanse as great as the Indian Ocean that divides continents, I am sure, will prove to be a unifying force of people, given their commonalities. Let us seek inspiration in the old quote, "the land divides, but the sea unites".

With these words, I wish the conference be seen as a step towards a great journey and a great mission.

Jai Hind.

All India Seminar on Global Legal Education

While conveying my best wishes to the organisers for holding a national level seminar on "GLOBAL LEGAL EDUCATION" in Odisha, I am happy that we are sharing the dais with the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee who is an erudite scholar and a prolific speaker. His love for the state is well known.

Confederation of Indian Bar is an important representative body, its objective being promotion, support and advancement in the field of legal profession for efficient functioning of legal system in India and organisation of conferences, seminars, workshops, lectures and study circles on any topic relevant to administration of justice in India. So, here we are today having an all-India seminar on GLOBAL LEGAL EDUCATION and I also appreciate KIIT's enthusiasm in associating itself with such initiatives.

Let me tell my august audience here that todays world is a fascinating place to live in. It is so because advancement in the fields of science and technology has made our life much more comfortable. Yet as we all are aware, conflicts – both major and minor – between states and nations have teared into human existence and conscience. Yes – we live in a modern society, equipped with knowledge and wisdom, yet we witness in many parts of the world unprecedented violation of human rights. Small disputes involving nations flare up into big conflicts. Neither people nor nations have prepared to settle matters either through talks or by legal means. This is where the concept of Global Legal Education has immense relevance. Legal education and its proper use would empower people as well as nations. This is as true in case of Asian nations as in African or European countries. Strengthening the edifice of legal education through constantly exposing people and leaders to various aspects and implications of law; and its advantages and disadvantages will go a long way in minimising and possibly, settling people-to-people and nation-to-nation conflicts.

If one were to ask me what does Law stand for, I would always widen its scope to include alleviation of human strife and misery, ensuring equal opportunity for one and all, and human redemption. Legal education throughout the world should focus on these aspects. However, this is a hugely important and relevant subject to be discussed and its various dimensions should be analysed. We have assembled here to hear from the Hon'ble President on the subject; yet I would limit myself to quoting three great minds from three different periods and focus on the words they have used.

Let me first quote Aristotle and see what the great Greek philosopher had to say:

'Man, when perfected, is the best of animals. But when separated from law and justice is the worst of all; since armed injustice is the more dangerous, and he is equipped at birth with the arms of intelligence and with moral qualities which he may use for the worst ends. If he has not virtue, he is the most unholy and the most savage of animals. The administration of justice is the principle of order in political society.'

The focus is on law, justice, moral equality, virtue and administration of justice. These are the concepts which, for thousands of years, have formed the foundation of democracy and justice.

Then I am quoting former U.S. President, Ronald Reagan who had once said,

"The most terrifying words in English language are :

I am from the Government and I am here to help."

These words had come from the Head of the world's most powerful democracy. This meant the most liberal of societies has not been able to allay the fears of the common man. And we have to achieve that objective. Citizens in a democracy should be free from fear.

Now let me quote from Robert H. Jackson, (1892-1954) and end my address:

'We are not final because we are infallible; we are infallible because we are final.'

So there we are : the citizenry should have absolute faith in the judiciary, so absolute that there is no scope for doubting infallibility. But then the judiciary will have to earn that absolute faith from the citizens.

With these words, I again thank our esteemed guest today, Hon'ble President of India. I thank the organisers.

Jai Hind.

International Seminar Kalinga-Lanka : Reviving Old Linkages and Exploring New Opportunities

Let me at the outset thank the Kalinga-Lanka Foundation for extending this invitation and inaugurate the Odisha Chapter of the Kalinga-Lanka Foundation today. I take this opportunity to share a few thoughts with the distinguished audience present here. The seminar held on the backdrop of Hon'ble Prime Minister's stress on "forging a new partnership" with one of our most important neighbours assumes great significance. Again, the recent State Visit by Hon'ble President of Sri Lanka to India promises a strong foundation for consolidating and strengthening the bilateral partnership by harnessing the enormous potential available

First, let me appreciate the efforts of the Kalinga-Lanka Foundation in organising this seminar as part of their endeavour to revive the close relationship existed between Kalinga, the present day Odisha and Lanka, the present day Sri Lanka. The Foundation established by some like-minded intellectuals of Odisha with active support of High Commission of Sri Lanka aims at rejuvenating the relation by exploring new means of linkage in a number of key sectors like education, art and culture, tourism and investment.

Sri Lanka's relations with Kalinga are immersed in the mists of history. The ancient chronicles of Lanka or that of Kalinga and the archaeological evidences tell us how the ancient people of these two regions enjoyed a strong sense of connectivity. The two regions also enjoyed common Buddhist heritage and it was another key means of strong connectivity. Benevolent influence of Kalinga's Emperor Ashoka resulted in the adoption of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. The ancient Kingdom of Anuradhapura where Buddhism was received from Emperor Ashoka's son Mahinda, saw the development of monasteries which developed into premier seats of learning that were visited by scholars and pilgrims from many parts of Asia. The transfer of Lord Buddha's sacred tooth relic to Lanka, by Kalingan King Guhaseeva, through his daughter Hemamala and son-in-law Dantha, is

still venerated by the Buddhists in the island nation as a manifestation of this strong bond. The tooth relic is considered a national symbol of Lanka. Apart from a common Buddhist heritage, history says that the founder of the Sinhala race was Kalinga's Prince Vijaya.

The trace of Buddhism in Odisha takes one to the ancient period as old as the day when two merchants 'Tapusa' and 'Bhallika' from Utkal now Odisha became Lord Buddha's first disciples. Buddhism became a world religion only after famous Kalinga-Asoka war. First time in world history, a conqueror get conquered by non-violence and truth and as a devout Buddhist Emperor Ashoka became the patron of the tenets of Buddhism across the world. It is here that the foundation of a great religion and culture was laid. This is the major contribution of Odisha or Kalinga in shaping the socio-cultural map of several countries in South East Asia, Far East and also in Sri Lanka. In spreading Buddhism to the whole world, Odisha held the torch of peace and non-violence. I think this message of tolerance and understanding is of great relevance today, as we see the tragic results of intolerance and hatred leading to violence and destruction, and great loss to societies. This message of peace, non-violence and tolerance is of equal importance in the present world. It is our duty to spread this message further and deeper, both in our own regions and the larger world. When the world faces threats of climate change due to a polluted environment the Buddhist code of environmental protection prescribed both to lay followers as well as for monks should be promoted for a symbiotic relationship between the human and his environment. I expect Kalinga- Lanka Foundation has a special task in this regard.

Buddhism had a great impact on Odisha's history and geography. It has great impact on Odia life and culture. The flourishing era of Buddhism could be felt and experienced when one walks through the vistas of Buddhism in Odisha that included a number of Buddhist centres of learning, art and establishments in several places. Ratnagiri is believed to be a superb destination of learning for the Buddhism of Tantric cult that is Vajrayana. These places of Buddhist

interest had been a great source of attraction to outside visitors including the famous Chinese traveller Hiuen T'sang. In fact, the Diamond Triangle of Lalitgiri, Udaygiri and Ratnagiri continues to fascinate visitors and scholars with archaeological findings. Monasteries of Ratnagiri, Lalitgiri and Udayagiri produced veritable masterpieces of Buddhist Art which are said to have influenced contemporary schools of Buddhist Art in South East Asia.

Like Buddhism, Kalinga's contribution to maritime trade and commerce is highly significant. Situated on the shore of Bay of Bengal, the ancient Kalinga has a long coastline. Kalinga's importance for trans-Asian maritime trade seems to have been strengthened by its location. It was not just the zest for commerce that had attracted sailors and merchants of Kalinga to far off islands. It had its impact as art, culture and tradition as well. Even folklore of Odisha spread to all these regions and the island nation of Sri Lanka is no exception to it. It is heartening to find that the influence built several centuries ago is still prevailing. However, it is an irony of history that the great maritime tradition has been dwindled and it is high time to revive the tradition for the upliftment of the two regions.

Today, with new horizons of hope rising in Sri Lanka and the rise of India on the world stage offering enormous possibilities, we have a historic opportunity to once again renew our historical link and restore our age-old ties. Both regions, the island nation and Odisha are richly endowed with natural resources and human capital. Both are strategically located in the Indian Ocean, with easy access to the expanding markets of South East Asia and East Asia. Promoting joint ventures and facilitating tourism and religious pilgrimage had rich potential benefits for both regions.

The future, just like the past, has to be intertwined and two regions should march in tandem with the clear objectives of promoting peace and prosperity. It is time to re-discover and reinvigorate the rich historic connect by way of multi-faceted initiatives for promotion of modern day people to people contacts, re-establishment of links in art and culture, education, skill development, science and technology,

tourism and business. Entrepreneurs from Odisha and Sri Lanka should be encouraged to go for joint ventures. I hope the Foundation would encourage investment to exploit the human and mineral resources of two regions.

Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nation, just like India. The island nation was well-known for many things including precious stones, ivory and spices. Sri Lanka's social indicators are among the best in Asia. It enjoyed near universal literacy with a very narrow gender gap. Cooperation will be very vital for improving social indicators.

When Odisha is emerging as an education hub in the entire Eastern India, networking with leading education institutions will give students of both regions greater exposure. I am told that the Foundation would promote studies of the Kalinga – Lanka shared history and culture as well as academic cooperation between institutions of the two regions. It would also promote research in socio-cultural and economic ties and give institutional support to scholars and artistes. It is heartening that the Foundation would be promoting and facilitating visits of tourists and pilgrims to sites in island nation and Odisha. We have a university specifically for cultural studies and linking the university with that of the island nation will promote studies as well as research to explore new information.

I have confined my words to a few thoughts especially the value of ancient linkage and Buddhist heritage and it is just like tip of iceberg. I leave the rest to the learned participants, academicians and scholars at this seminar to dwell upon at length in the sessions during these two days. I urge you to focus in your deliberations not only on sharing your own knowledge amongst yourselves but to seek ways and means to protect historical, cultural and intellectual value as you endeavour to share this knowledge for the benefit of all the people of two regions. More importantly, you may wish to seek ways and means, as to how historical links could be used as a tool for creating prosperity in both the regions. With these words, I wish this Seminar and initiative by the Kalinga-Lanka Foundation all success.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of 16th State Jamborette and First Tribal Jamborette

I am delighted to be in the midst of Scouts and Guides on the opening of the 16th State Jamborette and the 1st Tribal Jamborette. The concept of a Tribal Jamborette surely excites me as this new and unique idea will enable tribal boys and girls to get a feel of the vibrancy that a Jamborette offers and enjoy friendship with others from different parts of the State. There is a saying among tribals of Odisha: 'If you want to go fast, go alone. But if you want to go far, go together'. The essence of this tribal proverb is in abundant evidence at the first-ever get together of tribal students in a Jamborette that is especially meant for them.

The encouraging response from tribal students, to come out of their limited exposure and a willingness to learn is an inspiration for one and all. Tribals do go by trust and the present initiative is expected to go a long way in infusing that trust in Scouts and Guides activities and encouraging them to enroll their children as Scouts and Guides for their all-round development and bright future. As the Patron, I would like to congratulate all in the Odisha Bharat Scouts and Guides for their unique initiative. I appreciate the efforts made to make the Jamborette a success.

The State Training Centre at Barunei where you all have gathered, has in the past hosted the 13th National Jamboree and the 3rd SAARC Jamboree. This is a place of historical significance. For the legend of this Barunei hill aptly describes and symbolizes the character of Khordha people as a fighting race for the cause of motherland. The training centre is the grooming ground for many Scouts and Guides like you on many facets of Scouting and Guiding. In that way, this Jamborette holds a distinct significance for all of you.

This occasion is a very expressive demonstration of learning for our boys and girls to build a world of mutual trust and peace. It clearly manifests that you are resolute in your urge to fashion out a future which would be best not only for you but for all as seen from the

theme of this Jamborette, "Peace, Progress and Protect." For progress, peace is absolutely necessary and to make progress a continuing affair protection of rights and protection of our environment is a must. The world is always in need of men and women and leaders, strong and pure of heart. The principles for which Scouting and Guiding stands are the builders of such men and women and leaders.

Dear participants, you will be taught here about the Scout Promise and Law, about teamwork, about brotherhood/ sisterhood, about real courage, and about leadership. I am given to understand that you will also have adventure activities, fun games and many more exciting and thrilling activities.

Make the most of your stay here by learning what you can about your State, your country, our history, and our culture and your role as future citizens. Let you open your hearts to one another so that when you go back to your respective places, you shall have profited much from each other, not in terms of material things, but in terms of goodwill, understanding, and peace.

Seven decades ago, I was like many of you here today attending high school. Being a Scout gave me the self-confidence to believe, for the first time in my life, that I could achieve whatever I set my mind to. I can tell you that my scouting experiences, scout-masters, camping trips, adventures and many more – had huge influence in shaping my life.

I wish that you will strive to make yourselves as someone special, someone with unique qualities of mind and heart. Like so many Scouts and Guides before you, some of you will become leaders of industry and business; others will be engineers; some may cure diseases; some may design revolutionary software; some of you may become teachers. But, for most of you, your experience in Scouting and Guiding is the first major step toward the most important goal of all: becoming a good human being, a person of integrity, a person of moral courage, a person unafraid of hard work, a person of strong character – the kind of person who built this country and made it into the largest and vibrant democracy in the history of the world. A Scout

or for that matter a Guide is marked for life as an example of what a boy/girl and man/woman can be and should be. I wish you will be a role model.

Today, more than 70 years after I was a Scout, I find that much has changed in these years. One thing, however, that has remained the same over the years is the positive influence of Scouting on boys and of Guiding on girls and the ability of so many of you to inspire others with your determination, your character, your skills, and your moral.

The fate of our nation in the years to come and, I believe, the future of the world itself, depends on the kind of people we prepare. And, above all, the kind of citizens our young people will be.

We live in an era today where the young are increasingly viewed as the strength. As I look out at all of you, I see the legacy of Scouting and Guiding : a new generation of worthy leaders not only for Odisha and India but for the world in the 21st century. You, will be strong leaders of character, of faith, of skill; courageous defenders of human rights, believers in the brotherhood / sisterhood thanks to Bharat Scouts and Guides. I speak to you - Scouts and Guides today as a leader from one generation talking with the leaders of the next generation – young leaders on whom much will depend. And with leaders such as you, India will continue to be the beacon of hope for the rest of the world.

I wish you all a great Jamborette. May God bless you.

Jai Hind.

Annual Day Programme of War Veteran Officers' Association, Odisha

I am happy to address you today on the Annual Day celebration of War Veteran Officers' Association, Odisha. I am delighted to be in the presence of war veterans who had rendered yeoman service for securing unity and integrity of our motherland. Simply put, our men and women in uniform serve for preserving the lifeblood of the Nation.

My hearty thanks to all of you for performing your duty faithfully and nobly in peace and war. Let us pause to remember those who have sacrificed their life protecting the unity and integrity of the country.

It is heartening to note that the Association proudly boasts of distinguished officers who have been recognised for their outstanding bravery and merit. It has many recipients of medals for meritorious service and decorations for gallantry. These signify that the value of patriotism and service to the nation is dear to our officers. I am told that the Association lives to the legacy and saga of distinguished Defence officers and to continue the legacy, it periodically organises lectures in educational institutions to motivate youth of the State to join Defence Forces and the response has been quite encouraging. On the civilian front the Association closely associates itself in relief and rehabilitation programmes during natural calamities besides taking up a number of social welfare activities. Instituting annual scholarships for the children of Ex-servicemen for higher studies is another laudable endeavour on the part of the Association. I am told that it plans to give more scholarships and widen the scheme to include students enrolled in professional institutions and introduce other welfare schemes in future. I commend the War Veteran Officers' Association, Odisha for their well thought endeavours.

Our nation has great respect and affection for its Defence Forces. We see this in the expressions of grief and respect from fellow citizens which occurs each time our security personnel get martyred. We see it in the way they are welcomed home from overseas deployments or when they perform with energy and compassion to support those people afflicted by natural disasters.

The bond between the people and the Defence Force is strong and its value is incalculable. It is the essential core of Armed Forces' being. Our security personnel are a reflection of the society from which they are drawn and they are held to a higher level of account because of their place as defenders of the Nation and its interests.

In many ways our Defence Force in which you have served is the best in war or peace. I can proudly say that the Indian Defence Force is a great national institution and a very fine fighting force. Your lives have been lived out against the backdrop of the steady evolution of that wonderful institution, so loved and admired by the whole Nation.

As we celebrate glorious history of our Defence Forces and its ethos, the wonderful achievements of our soldiers and Officers and also their supreme sacrifices give an impression of who they are and what they stand for. The people of the country hold them in very high regard. They all deserve that, and it is their efforts that have earned it. Our soldiers and officers know that every small step they take can leave a footprint in our national history. All of them carry the weight of many glorious achievements and supreme sacrifices.

Past generations of our Defence personnel have made this country great. The present generation can do the same. They are disciplined, dedicated, and hardworking, with a wealth of knowledge, skills, and experience. They have learned to put service before self, bridge differences to accomplish shared goals, persevere in the face of obstacles, choose "the harder right instead of the easier wrong," and set the example for others to follow.

But we still need employers to take an interest, and we need industry leaders who understand the value of war veterans to take the lead in communicating that value to other employers.

War veterans have worked with others, often very different from themselves, to accomplish great feats. They showed care and compassion for those in need, sometimes at the risk of their own lives. They lived by the core values of duty, honour, and patriotism, and in doing so, earned all our trust and respect. At a time when our country faces so many challenges, we need to make the most of what war veterans have to offer, and they need

and deserve our sincere cooperation in making the sometimes difficult transition to civilian life.

It has been said, "Poor is the nation that has no heroes, but beggared is the nation that has and forgets them." By serving the country you have established a magnificent legacy of valour, and professional military excellence.

We want the younger generation to know that the Nation respects and cares for those who have "borne the battle." And we want the younger generation to know them as role models of excellence, so they can understand the price of valour and love for the country. I am told that youngsters today are searching for something to believe in, something greater than themselves, something they can look up to and respect. They don't have to look any further than the amazing examples of loyalty, courage, selfless service, duty, and honour in combat by our war veterans.

The Nation needs heroes, and people of all ages feel proud and inspired when they remember examples of patriotic spirit and integrity of our war veterans. I would like to urge upon them to continue to provide that spark. As it says in a famous prayer, "rise above the common level of life." And in doing so, help inspire future generations of Indians by the examples of your own lives, in the aftermath of the actions that set you apart from the rest of us. This country needs its heroes.

To the members of War Veteran Officers' Association, Odisha I would say that as you have served your nation, your vast career experience must have developed in you a profound commitment to the value, as the best and most sustainable way to pursue nation's interests. I look forward to you to serve the society and nation with renewed zeal and commitment to value in various capacities.

With these words, I wish the War Veteran Officers' Association, Odisha all success in its endeavours.

Jai Hind.

Pravasi Odisha Utsav at IMT Manesar, Gurgaon

I am delighted to address the Pravasi Odias on the celebration of Pravasi Odisha Utsav organized by Kalinga Bharti Foundation on the auspicious occasion of Utkal Divas celebration. It is good to find so many Odias assembling here at this industrially developed city of Gurgaon to celebrate Pravasi Odisha Utsav. I understand that this Utsav is organised in commemoration of Odisha's Statehood and strives to preserve the State's distinct culture and traditions.

On the momentous occasion of 80th anniversary of Odisha Statehood Day, I extend my hearty greetings and felicitations to all the Odias present here for this celebration. First April is, indeed, a memorable day in the political history of Odisha, for it was on this day in 1936 that Odisha became the first State of the country which was formed on linguistic basis. On this day, I pay my humble tribute to great leaders of Odisha who were the architects of this State and those who strived hard to create a State that reflected the aspirations and the identity of the people of the State.

Statehood gave to the people of Odisha a distinct identity besides providing them ample opportunities to shape the destiny of their land. All these years Odisha has proudly showcased its rich beautiful cultural life. People celebrate festivals here with great sense of togetherness and festive spirit. In fact, all through the year people celebrate several socio-religious festivals reveling on ethnic and distinct tribal identities.

Odisha is blessed by the generosity of nature, the hospitality of its people and the richness of its culture. This gives it a well-deserved right to claim that Odisha is an incredible land. Odisha has been part of the global currents of commerce since ancient times. It had a strong tradition of maritime trade, extending to South and South East countries.

The State's distinctive progress has been genuinely recognized by the country. It has been awarded with the prestigious Krishi Karman Award four times during the last five years in

recognition of its performance in food grains production. Odisha has become a very important information technology, education and business hub in the recent times. In education, be it higher education, technical or management education the State is at the forefront with the establishment of a number of leading national level institutions. Our youths are engaged in making Odisha a progressive and prosperous State and they are bringing glory to the State and the country in diverse fields. And it is needless to say that the State has made rapid strides in various fields during these 80 years and is determined and committed for scripting more successes. These awards and recognitions are proof of our developing status and we would ensure that we continue the good performance in all years to come.

The State is taking up pioneering steps for holistic cross-sectoral growth of Odisha. It has become a leading State of new opportunities in attracting investment and in the ease of doing business.

Today we have the honour of having with us Hon'ble Chief Minister of Haryana, a member of his Cabinet and Hon'ble M.L.A.s on this celebration of Pravasi Odisha Utsav. I am sure their presence and support will unfold a new era in cooperation and further strengthen friendly ties between Odisha and Haryana in a number of thriving sectors. We would do well to learn from the experiences and expertise of leading venture specialists from both the States. I also believe that we should be vital partners and participants in each other's social and economic development. I assure the Government of Haryana of our continuing effort to support your endeavours in every field right from investment to skill upgradation.

Despite our all-out and sincere efforts to deliver the best to the common man and develop at par with other States of the country, our State is still behind when it comes to economic development such as infrastructure in comparison to our developed counterparts. Today the time demands to rebuild, re-dedicate and reiterate the

commitment and march on with a sole mission of development and progress.

At this juncture, I look up to the Pravasi Odias to strengthen State's effort to remove economic backwardness through cooperation, partnership and generous funding. I would like to recount here the words of one of the most well known votaries of globalization Thomas L. Friedman who said, "The challenge in this era of globalization—for countries and individuals—is to find a healthy balance between preserving a sense of identity, home, and community, and doing what it takes to survive within the globalization system".

It is indeed my good fortune that today I am surrounded by many Pravasi Odias who, nourished by their Odishan roots, have shown to the country and the world how the right balance between progress and the preservation of ancient traditions, ensures a better future. All these Pravasi Odia achievers have set benchmarks in lands far off from their native State and in diverse fields. It is my privilege to now invite them to share their unique experiences in quest of realizing their full potential and making their dreams come true, so that Odisha can all collectively benefit from their individual journeys.

We are prepared to respond to your expectations from Odisha. We invite you, not only to share our vision of Odisha in the new millennium, but also to help us shape its contours. We do not want your riches; we want the richness of your experience. We can gain from the breadth of vision that your exposure has given you.

Celebration of the Day of formation of the State of Odisha is a joyous occasion when all people recall with pride, enthusiasm and satisfaction, the multifarious and significant achievements made by them during the past years. It is a day for introspection as to what we have achieved so far and evolve strategy to achieve our much desired status of a prosperous and advanced State.

It is my fervent hope that the State scales new heights in overall development and thus would contribute significantly to the progress and prosperity of the nation.

The people of the State have to fulfil the dreams envisioned by the architects of Odisha in making an agenda for the future. It should be an agenda that helps the youth to constructively and positively contribute to the growth and development of this beautiful State.

The celebration of Statehood Day in such magnitude is the reflection of enthusiasm and pride for Odisha. On this joyous occasion of the Utkal Divas and Pravasi Odisha Utsav, I once again extend my best wishes to you for your well-being, happiness, growth and progress. I also wish you all an enjoyable celebration of this Festival.

Jai Hind.

World Red Cross Day Function

I am happy to be here this afternoon to join you at World Red Cross Day Celebrations being organized by Odisha State Branch of Indian Red Cross Society.

As the world marks May 8, the birthday of Sir Jean Henry Dunant, the founder of Red Cross and the joint recipient of the first Nobel Peace prize, we pay our homage and express our gratitude to the founder for giving the world such a wonderful organization. We also celebrate more than 150 years of humanitarian action by this international organization. Red Cross is not active only in times of crisis. Its field of action covers human distress in all its forms. Its volunteers concern themselves with the welfare of the needy, the elderly, the hospitalized and the physically challenged. The day gives us an opportunity to recognize the amazing work of volunteers and staff who go out rendering selfless humanitarian services and saving lives every day. Through its commitment to providing humanitarian assistance, the Red Cross Societies reach out to more than 200 million people each year. It is quite heartening that often those in need of assistance become the next generation of volunteers.

Since its inception, the Red Cross Movement has grown spreading its wings and is now well recognized and respected for its largest humanitarian network and over 100 million members and volunteers worldwide. Red Cross is solely interested in helping those who suffer and it does so with impartiality, regardless of people's nationality, origin, opinions or beliefs. This is the key for Red Cross to reach people who need help.

Over one and a half century ago, Sir Henry Dunant wrote "A Memory of Solferino". This book reflected on his experience rallying villagers to treat wounded soldiers on a battlefield in Italy, regardless of who they were fighting for. His instinct to help laid the foundations for the Red Cross as it exists today.

The theme for this year World Red Cross Day is "Everywhere for everyone" and this is true for Red Cross which has made unique contribution to humanity everywhere and it promises to continue to give a voice to millions of people and to strive to address their humanitarian needs.

Red Cross is an international organization, which is located in almost every country of the world. All around the world, every hour of every day, the International Red Cross Movement is at work helping people in need. It reaches into all levels of society from offices to communities with aid and support each year.

Red Cross has given many times its presence and it will always be present everywhere for everyone with its gamut of service. Some of the services that the Red Cross provides 24 hours a day, 7 days a week are: emergency services, health and safety services, services to homeless, services to those who need blood, mortuary services, services to the armed forces, and services to senior citizens to name just a few.

The Red Cross Movement imbues among its members strong humanitarian values and the importance of service to mankind. I am very impressed by the varied community service provided by the State Red Cross in bringing joy to the less fortunate in our community. Whether it is befriending a physically challeged or rendering First Aid to an injured person, Red Cross volunteers are certainly making a difference. They are good role models for other youths.

We have all witnessed the enthusiasm and services rendered by volunteers during the mega Nabakalebara Car Festival at Puri last year and on different occasions of emergency. Since there will always be destructions, natural disasters, wars and all kinds of human suffering, the need for an organization which deals solely with providing help to the needy and alleviating the human suffering is great. The mission of Red Cross is to help people prepare for, and cope with emergencies; to enhance self-reliance and concern for others; and to improve the quality of human life. It does this through services that are led by volunteers and guided by the principles of Red Cross Movement. □

At times, the activities Red Cross volunteers carry out quietly at school or college and at other events may go unnoticed, but let me assure you that it is definitely appreciated. All little acts of kindness have a far-reaching impact in shaping a more compassionate and caring society.

In the 150 years and more since its founding, the threat of crisis and war has continuously multiplied. Amongst the challenges facing humanitarian action today is an increase in natural disasters and health emergencies, problems of safe access to health care and difficulties for volunteers to reach people in need in certain contexts. Take for example; the number of natural disasters reported over the last 40 years has increased by nearly 400 per cent.

Whether it is by using new technologies to improve our response, seeking the leadership of young people in our efforts to extend services or adapting to climate change in the way we carry out our work, Red Cross always looks for innovative approaches and partnerships.

Every individual has a role to play in helping others in need, in our community and beyond driven by the power of empathy and service. Considering that each individual has its place and function in the community and by helping him to find that place and fulfill that function, the Red Cross is working towards building a harmonious society, in which its essential role is to serve as a link between people. I would like to encourage all of you to play an active role in reaching out and helping the less fortunate in your community. Your contribution will certainly go a long way in helping to build a more caring and compassionate community. It is never too early to start. Contributing to the Red Cross you are being assured that your contribution goes to a good cause.

Red Cross is effective in its humanitarian response and grassroots communication because it is an organization that is strongly anchored in local communities. Millions of Red Cross volunteers and professionals, working in close proximity with those in need, are leading the effort to bring about positive change in their urban and rural settings, towns and cities. Red Cross believes that moving forward, together, it will shape the world humanitarian agenda.

It is appropriate that on this occasion of World Red Cross Day, we express our gratitude for all the things that Red Cross volunteers have done to help alleviate human suffering and bring joy everywhere for everyone and shown commitment to the ideals of the Movement. I wish Red Cross will continue to inspire individuals to serve humanity with new vigour and further consolidates its presence and makes its service felt and available everywhere for everyone.

Jai Hind.

Centenary Celebration of Circuit Sitting of High Court of Orissa

I am indeed delighted to participate in the Centenary Celebrations of Circuit Sitting of Patna High Court for Odisha in Cuttack. At the outset, I extend my warm felicitations to the legal fraternity and to the people of Odisha at this crowning moment in the history of Orissa High Court.

The celebrations of 100 years of any institution, big or small, is a great event in the history of that institution, but when it is about the celebration relating to High Court it is an event of greater public importance and rejoicing. Orissa High Court is celebrating an historic occasion, the centenary of Circuit Sitting of Patna High Court at Cuttack.

Today's function brings back to our mind the vivid memories of the setting up of Circuit Sitting at Cuttack one hundred years ago that brought jubilation among the people. The Circuit Sitting of High Court is surely an important step towards meeting the demand for a separate Odisha state. It is appropriate to recollect the untiring efforts of Utkal Gaurav Madhusudan Das, a leading lawyer and the architect behind the formation of separate Odisha state who strove for the Circuit Bench of Patna High Court at Cuttack. Let me take this opportunity to pay my respect and homage to Madhu babu. I understand that today's function is part of your ongoing Centenary celebrations. Undoubtedly it is a momentous occasion. However, in the midst of rejoicings and celebration the occasion also calls for introspection.

Since the time of its first sitting, the Court which later was converted to a High Court passed from one stage of evolution to another carving out a place of distinction for itself not only in the judicial history of the country but in its public life as well.

It is heartening that the Orissa High Court has the proud distinction of having contributed a number of eminent Judges to the Supreme Court of India. Even some Judges adorned the office of the Chief Justice of India with distinction. The High Court had a number of Judges who were elevated to other High Courts as Chief Justice. Besides

this, the High Court has also produced some very distinguished Judges who have rendered meritorious services to the cause of law and justice. The Orissa High Court also has the distinction of producing a galaxy of eminent lawyers. Their valuable contribution in the ambit of administration of justice deserves special mention. They laid great traditions and sound foundations to a thriving legal framework in the state.

My memory of a High Court goes back to the year 1946 when I came over as a fresh law graduate passing out from Allahabad University to practice in Gawahati High Court. I was attracted to law profession because of a number of reasons. It was a noble profession and lawyers had a significant impact on the destiny of this nation. Many leaders of Indian freedom struggle were mostly from this profession. Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Gopal Krushna Gokhale, Sardar Ballavbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, to name just a few, were all lawyers.

In those days when I practiced law people talked of the High Court, its Judges and members of the Bar with awe. I had dreams in my eyes to make it big as a lawyer helping those who are needy and those who couldn't raise voice against injustice and exploitation. But of course, after few days of practice I shifted to politics but I always cherish those fond memories as a lawyer.

I have always maintained that an independent judiciary is a national asset. It must be competent and impartial. It is well known that the rule of law sustains democracy, and it is equally true that to a bold and independent judiciary is assigned the stupendous task of maintaining the rule of law. The framers of the Indian Constitution at the time of framing of our constitution were concerned about the kind of judiciary our country should have. This concern of the members of the Constituent Assembly was responded by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in the following words : "There can be no difference of opinion in the House that our judiciary must be both independent of the executive and must also be competent in itself. And the question is how these two objects can be secured."

What was the reason for the framers of our constitution to be so much concerned about providing the separate entity to the judiciary and making it self-competent? The answer to this question lies in the very basic understanding that so as to secure the stability and prosperity of the society, the framers at that time understood that such a society could be created only by guaranteeing the fundamental rights and the independence of the judiciary to guard and enforce those fundamental rights. Also in a country like India, the independence of the judiciary is of utmost importance in upholding the pillars of the democratic system hence ensuring a free society.

Independence of the judiciary is a basic feature of the Constitution. It is the pre-requisite for the smooth functioning of the Constitution and for the realization of a democratic society based on the rule of law Rule of law that is responsible for good governance of the country can be secured through unbiased judiciary. Law has to change so as to meet to the needs of the changing society. Similarly judicial independence has to be seen with the changing dimension of the society. Judicial Accountability and Judicial Independence have to work hand in hand to ensure the real purpose of setting up of the institution of judiciary.

Equality before law is a fundamental concept of our legal system. Right to equality ensures the guarantees to every person the right to equality before law and equal protection of the laws. All are equal in the eyes of law. The famous legal luminary Dr. Jennings rightly said and I quote, "equality before the law means that among equals the law should be equal and should be equally administered, that like should be treated alike. The right to sue and be sued to prosecute and prosecuted for the same kind of action should be same for all citizens of full age and understanding without distinctions of race, religion, wealth, social status or political influence". Right to equality is one of the most important parts of our Indian Constitution, which gives strength to all the people. It is incumbent upon the upcoming generation to secure their right and change our developing India into developed India.

Judicial activism is not an easy concept to define. It means different things to different persons. Of course, some activists denounce

judicial decisions when they do not agree with them. Activism. like beauty, is often in the eyes of the beholder. In India, the opening up of access to courts to the poor, indigent and disadvantaged sections of the nation through Public Interest Litigation, popularly known by its acronym PIL, is unexceptionable judicial activism. From 1979, the judiciary led by the Supreme Court in India became relevant to the nation in a manner not contemplated by the makers of the Constitution and became an active participant in the dispenser of social justice.

The well known Justice Jackson of the U.S. has aptly said : "The doctrine of judicial activism which justifies easy and constant readiness to set aside decisions of other branches of Government is wholly incompatible with a faith in democracy and in so far it encourages a belief that judges should be left to correct the result of public indifference it is a vicious teaching."

Unless the parameters of PIL are strictly formulated by the Supreme Court and strictly observed, PIL which is so necessary in India, is in danger of becoming diffuse, unprincipled, encroaching into the functions of other branches of government and ineffective by its indiscriminate use.

The rule of law is a fundamental component of democratic society. John Adams, who with Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence, wrote in 1776 in his Thoughts on Government. "a republic is an empire of laws, and not of men."

Most people say they believe in the rule of law, yet few can define it coherently. High rule-of-law scores are the unique biggest contributors to national prosperity, peace, liberty and freedom from corruption. Virtually nothing is more important for us to understand and uphold than the rule of law. The rule of law should be a living reality properly understood by ordinary people. It is constitutionally more important than is generally realised.

According to Aristotle, the term unjust is held to apply both to the person who breaks the law and the person who takes more than his due, the unfair man. Therefore, a person who abides by the law and the person who is fair are just men.

It is the lawyer who makes law an instrument of social justice. They must protect the rights of the people and ensure that professional standards are maintained and legal ethics do not take a back seat. To the younger members of the Bar, I would say that they are the hope of our tomorrow. I would advise them to believe in working hard, be equipped with knowledge, and uphold the dignity of this noble profession.

Even in this long span of 100 years in the service of the cause of justice, from the first sitting of Circuit Court to Orissa High Court this institution of justice has built up high traditions worthy of emulation. It has been well said, "It takes centuries to make a little history and it takes centuries of history to make a tradition." The glorious traditions of this Court are the common heritage of the Bench and the Bar alike. The work of dispensation of Justice in this Court has been performed by Judges of this Court assisted most ably by the members of a glittering and independent Bar which can boast of very illustrious names. These names are not only a source of pride and glory for this Court but for the whole country.

With these words, I congratulate you all for having had this glorious past and for the glorious achievements of this High Court in the present times. The Centenary has closed one chapter in the history of the High Court of Orissa. I hope the celebrations would give you strength and capacity not only to preserve the glory and grandeur of this precious legacy but to enhance it further by your achievements, so that, when the next centenary of this historic occasion is celebrated, posterity passes the verdict that we proved ourselves worthy of our rich inheritance. It is my fervent wish that this Court will maintain its traditions and will achieve even greater heights as a Temple of Justice. I have no doubts about this. I wish you all good luck and Godspeed.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of XUB Sustainability Summit-2016

I am delighted to inaugurate this Sustainability Summit-2016 which focuses on energy, peace and global governance. I congratulate the Xavier University Bhubaneswar who have made this event such an important occasion and accorded me the opportunity to address such an impressive group of participants. In fact, deliberations on sustainability are gaining ground all over the world and focus upon energy, peace and governance which are the vital issues to ponder over.

It is always a pleasure for me to visit educational institutions. It is more pleasurable at the Xavier University Bhubaneswar where I find an enlightened audience of students, faculty and intellectuals discussing the global concerns with enthusiasm.

Here it is important to be reminded of the context in which the environment has emerged, from an issue of marginal interest to one which we must now see as fundamental to the human future. It is important that the leadership and we, the people must understand that our future in the 21st century depends on our ability to make the transition to a sustainable development pathway as the only means of ensuring peace, security and continuity of our remarkable progress.

If the 19th century was about the competition over natural resources around the world, and the 20th century was much about the competition between political ideologies, I believe that the 21st century will be the energy transition race from carbon fuels to renewable energies. We have seen energy becoming a political power that triggered the European integration and led to the creation of the European Union and in the 21st century the transition to renewable energies is the new framework for global cooperation.

I will not deny that energy can often also become a divisive force. But at the same time I would like to say that energy cooperation in the 21st century when energy depends on technology

and expertise to exploit renewable sources would create trust, prosperity, and neighbourly relations even among countries where trust would have been inconceivable just several decades ago. It was true in Europe 60 years ago, it will be true in India, and anywhere else in the world.

Transforming the world's energy systems is now an urgent necessity if we are to avoid the dangerous impacts of global warming. The energy sector is by far the largest emitter of greenhouse gases and is the key battleground for change. We know more effort is needed, and quickly. Delaying new mitigation efforts will make it much harder to transition the world's energy systems to a sustainable, equitable and low-emissions future. Renewables must and should eventually take the full share of the global energy market as early as possible. I strongly believe that investments in renewable energy must be scaled up rapidly. Improved energy efficiency and reduced energy demand is the global need of the hour for sustained development.

Like in case of energy the world today faces another serious concern in the form of peace. Reflecting on global perspectives on peace in the present period, it is argued that the dominant perceptions and practices of peace were not serving the world. Every day we come across sad news of violence, wars, and disasters. I cannot recall a single day without a report of something terrible happening somewhere.

Today, we live in an age characterized by the absence of peace. Millions of men and women in the world live in fear of violence and breach of peace. Even today, nations feel threatened by other nations; even today, we must concede to each nation the right to stand ready to defend itself with the terrible weapons now at its disposal.

Conflict, war and violence have brought unimaginable destruction to the people. Without peace, there will only be more fighting, more death, and more displacement. The idea that the reign of peace is the ultimate truth has been given expression by a number

of great world leaders including our Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Junior, Nelson Mandela to name a few. It is my profound conviction that the solution lies in us to reject violence and opt for an ethical alternative; because violence or bloodshed does not bring about perennial peace.

Today, we express our solidarity with the sufferings of communities in the conflict- affected areas and we do so in the spirit of peace and justice, which we believe go hand in hand. May the nations, in their efforts to maintain peace, do their utmost to contribute to development as peace is essential for development and more so for sustainable development.

The need to secure peace by eradicating the seeds of war continues to be a primary aim of international community. Crises confront the nations in regular intervals and it is imperative for the humankind to prepare and act for managing crises through collective efforts. Only when the ideals of peace are secure in the minds of the leaders of the communities, the threats of war and instability will be banished from the region and the frontiers of progress will receive due attention.

The survival and vitality of international organizations depend on two factors: the capacity to change and adapt and the quality of their governance. Based on human solidarity across borders and transcending national perspectives, the global governance must provide the framework for bringing together the countries for cohesion and prosperity.

The challenge of global governance – governance for the world to establish order, stability and progress even in the absence of a world government – is manifold in the face of several most pressing problems of the day. Fuel scarcity, climate change, terrorism, etc. are often global in scope and require global solutions.

The priority before the international community is to address twin challenges of building sustainable peace through positive global governance. I mean peace that is more than the absence of violence that seeks to eliminate the root causes of conflict, offers

social justice and builds respectful relationships. We must pledge to foster inter-cultural understanding, tolerance and mutual respect among the nations. We must redouble our efforts for building a better and more sustainable world order.

With these words, I wish a very fruitful deliberation at the summit and hope that it will come out with positive recommendations. I wish the endeavour and the Sustainability Summit-2016 all success.

Jai Hind.

52nd Freshers' Social of Naga Students' Union, Kolkata

I am delighted to be in your midst today on the 52nd Freshers' Social of Naga Students' Union Kolkata. Another fresh batch of students from Nagaland has come to this grand old city of Kolkata to shape their destiny and add wings to their dreams. When I am amongst these freshers I am driven down the memory lane to the 195Os when I was like one of you came to Kolkata then Calcutta to pursue my studies in the prestigious Scottish Church College with great ambition and aspirations. I am proud to study in the cultural capital of India where many illustrious persons including Nobel Prize winners Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, Mother Teresa and Amartya Sen have had their roots in this city. Here I find greatness is but a way of life to the city.

The 'City of Joy' has myriad nuances and exploring it is a joy in itself. It has the quiet grandeur that warms everyone and its cosmopolitan character gives new comers a feel at home. Much water has flown down the Ganges but the city has ardently held on to its roots, has donned a new name but retained its old identity. One can only leave the city with sweet memories to cherish and a desire to return.

I have a very personal and emotional attachment with this awesome city. It has played an important role in my life as here I started my higher education before I went to Allahabad for further studies. However, my stay in Kolkata had given me a broad outlook and exposure that turned out to be very vital in my life. While extending my hearty greetings and good wishes to the freshers I am sure they will find studying here quite interesting and at the same time beneficial for them.

Since this Naga Students' Union Kolkata is a pioneer in enabling students from Nagaland to be united, peacefully pursue studies here and involve in various community welfare activities promoting Naga culture and identity, it seems appropriate that I have

this conversation from your grounds. Naga Students' Union Kolkata has a distinct history and identity. Over the years it has grown, become stronger and larger embracing new changes and ideas and yet holding to its roots. By having a woman President for the first time in its history Naga Students' Union Kolkata shows that it is ready to script many glorious achievements and take the morale and spirit of students of Nagaland to a new height.

On a personal front I look at this occasion with great optimism and with immense confidence and faith on the younger generation who will be the architect of tomorrow's Nagaland and India.

As young you have dreams, ambitions and aspirations. But to realise it you have to work hard because nothing comes without hard work, determination and commitment. When you are pursuing your studies it is important to acquire skills and knowledge to succeed in this highly competitive world. It is the education that will liberate your mind and make you confident and bold in taking over any challenge and give you the wisdom to distinguish between right and wrong. And this is what Nagaland needs today, I mean a knowledgeable human resource who will know where the shoe pinches and find out correct remedies, to get the state out of present mess and uncertainties. When the world is changing fast and the country is forging ahead to become a global superpower Nagaland must prosper and advance to be on the mainstream of national life burying all internal differences for the larger interest of Nagaland. Thus I have chosen a topic, 'Today's challenges are tomorrow's advantages' for this occasion.

Here I would like to say that where there is challenge there is opportunity side by side and who has the ability to transform those challenges into opportunities and advantages for the future becomes the real winner. My effort is to provide future leaders with an overview of the current challenges as well as a glimpse of the future.

Let us talk about what is happening in the world beyond Nagaland's borders and what does that imply for the state's future? There has never been a more exciting time than today and the world becomes more and more competitive and greater opportunities arise.

There has never been a more exciting time to be a free citizen of a country like India. India of the future will be a nation that is agile, that is innovative, that is creative. Nagaland being an integral part of India, must be able to take advantage of that. Nagaland needs to develop a strategy of political stability, economic integration into the national economy and strong social cohesion.

Nagaland has its own hopes and dreams. This makes the task of contemplating and reasoning together essential for building and realizing a future that epitomizes the people's collective aspirations. A state that fails to dialogue with itself risks the danger of moving further away from its cherished dream. The Naga people today find themselves in such a predicament. We must have to do less apologizing for past mistakes and do more looking forward and addressing today's challenges.

Tomorrow's leaders are required to have well-developed leadership capabilities, skilled in decision making and execution and creating a vision for the future. It is for our young men and women to bring to public expression those hopes and yearnings that have been denied for so long and suppressed so deep. A mindset has to be developed by squarely facing the facts – by discussing honestly and openly the problems confronting Nagaland's politics, economy, cultural and social life and then working together on a strategy to turn things around. They have the task to recover, nurture, nourish, evoke and lead a consciousness and perception that is an alternative to the present status quo. Only then, will the state begin to see the power of youth and of change, and of a Naga state that can be built – brick by brick, strong and beautiful.

Nagaland faces many challenges. But it can also lay claim to some significant advantages. I don't need to tell you about one of our advantages: the high literacy and education in Nagaland.

Education is the mother of everything; one cannot sustain or survive without education. Once you acquire education, you can conquer every obstacle in life. Naga society has a socio-economic imbalance that has created lot of differences. At the educational

institutions. education is imparted in a wide array of fields and disciplines of higher education. Our students are prepared to see and grab opportunities and to come up with smart solutions for challenges facing our state and country. Our endeavour is enabling students, researchers to develop the innovations and the knowledge the state and country needs.

It is not simply about access to education - which is obviously important - but that is really only the first step. We must ensure that all have access to quality education. Unfortunately, the state still struggles with its obligation and responsibility to provide employment. We have a large number of educated unemployed and it is a challenge. We need to equip them with skills to match the demands of the job market. The key to success is specialization. So find your niche and embrace innovation.

Right now, you are students. Eventually, you will become employers, employees, professionals, educators, and caretakers of our state in this 21st century. So how you can help you prepare for the task? You will come across questions such as "What should we do more of?" and "What should we do less of?" You are born with different strengths and you grow best through those strengths. One size does not fit all in assessment and instruction. You must learn from your strengths.

As the future of Nagaland you must make yourself a living element for the progress and the happiness of Naga people and in building Nagaland of your dreams without compromising its unique history, culture and identity of Naga society. Your consciousness will empower you to be the change you want to see and help to address all the questions that define peaceful and harmonious existence of Nagas.

In Nagaland, economic growth has come to a standstill mainly because of the dominance of undergrounds and strong fear psychosis. The absence of genuine democratic space denies engaging in economic activities. This has considerably weakened the system. It has reduced the Naga people's capacity to think together and address this important challenge confronting the modern Naga. Nagas very well know that the

future prosperity of this province does not depend on increased public spending. Rather economic progress must come in large part from within and in particular from a whole new generation of Naga youth and energetic entrepreneurs with knowledge, innovation and skills who will be determined to stay in the state while pursuing their dreams. But entrepreneurship and economic activity needs the trust factor. The trust factor is the oil that makes the economic engine run more efficiently and effectively. Therefore, ground has to be prepared to build the trust factor for giving momentum to an almost dead economic activities and investment.

The first, and in many ways the most obvious, is that none of us can afford to sit back and ignore the rapid changes that are taking place and imminent challenges and huge possibilities before the state. On failing to do so, we will be doing a disservice to the state. With many opportunities of economic boom ready to come to the state in near future it is important that the ground must be made fertile to gain advantage for our own development and progress and also for that of the country. Our young people need to learn skills to do the job that their state and country's economy needs.

This is a time of greatest importance for Nagaland and India. The IT revolution and the Internet are causing immense changes to how we live - altering lifestyles, habits, social norms, how people communicate and learn about the world – not just through books, newspaper or television but through Wikipedia, Twitter and Facebook, which are much more dynamic and help better to keep up with the changing world.

All these IT can only be a boom for Nagaland only when we are well placed to take advantage of the technology and make a quantum leap forward. Why? I give you reasons. When the world is becoming technological, digital and forward looking we cannot lag behind. We need to look ahead, try to look over the horizon to keep our economy open, and to use technology to overcome our physical constraints.

We have to make our population IT savvy who can understand technology and know how to use it. And if you look at overseas one will find many young Indian professionals are in software, engineering and medical profession holding key positions. We have the talent and know-how to help us get a head-start.

That is why we have set ourselves the goal of becoming a Smart Nagaland and a vibrant part of Digital and Smart Nation. In order to bring all these advantages together, and develop in terms of quality of life, vibrancy, and opportunities for our people, we have to muster the full resources of our institutions and our youth to focus decisively on problems and things which matter to our people. The state needs you to step forward, to spark the bright ideas, to make progress on the challenges, and to change the world. And I hope this forum, will be another step in your dreams to change the world.

The single biggest issue when it comes to leadership development is now frequently the single most overlooked challenge as well: the fact that we are continuing to teach people how to solve familiar problems using familiar methods, when we should be teaching the opposite. Specifically, our students as future leaders should be learning how to improvise, innovate, and be more creative about using both new tools and familiar resources to adapt to unfamiliar challenges and unexpected events. There should be a sense of adventure and confidence.

I would like our students to be bold, be creative and be open to new perspectives. The more you have all the tools you will stay in tune with changing times and trends, stay on top of your field, and stay ahead of the curve as well. I see in you, strength, conviction, commitment and determination to rebuild the damages done for decades and also urge to contribute knowledge and wisdom to fight evil things that are prevailing in the state. I am confident that change can be bought about by you; you are the future of our society. I appeal to the students to have the knowledge of Naga history from its roots as many good culture and tradition had been lost in the blind adoption of western culture and lifestyle.

Let me conclude by saying that it is the hard work, ingenuity and determination of young Nagas in every corner of Nagaland that will script a new destiny and create the economy we all want to share and prosper. I appeal to the youth to listen to the calling of motherland and do their best.

With these words, I wish Naga Students' Union Kolkata all success in defining a progressive, prosperous future for Nagaland and this great country. I wish all our students get a good education and become better and useful citizens of tomorrow.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of the Kalinga-Indonesia Dialogue: Structure & Culture

Today is auspicious Kartik Purnima and Odisha is celebrating the occasion recollecting its thousand year old legacy of flourishing maritime trade and commerce in the days of Kalinga now Odisha. On this day I am aware that Odia merchants (Sadhabas) sailed to far off places such as Java, Sumatra, Bali now Indonesia, Sri Lanka and other Southeast Asian countries. This in fact contributed to the land's prosperity and helped cultural and social integration with the people of these far off islands. The imprints of such integration provide the stamp of Kalinga's wide reach and deep influence. Odisha proudly cherishes its rich maritime socio-cultural influence. It is great to find local people of these places continue to feel proud of their Kalinga lineage.

Kalinga now Odisha still stands tall as a witness of its thousand year old legacy. By visiting Odisha, one can pay homage to the ancient land of Kalinga which put all its resources and the entire maritime trade route to propagate Buddhism across the world. The great Kalinga war that known for its horrific consequences when millions sacrificed lives in defence of their motherland, changed Chandasoka to Dharmasoka and he renounced violence. Under patronage of Emperor Asoka, the maritime trade route of ancient Odisha was instrumental in propagation of Buddhism worldwide. Emperor Kharavela belonged to the third generation of the Kalinga Chedi dynasty and it was under him that Kalinga became a great power, with extensive territories as an empire.

There would never have been any appropriate occasion than today for the inauguration of Kalinga-Indonesia Dialogue that primarily aims at designing a roadmap for reviving mutual understanding, cooperation on a numerous areas spreading from culture, art and architecture, textiles, crafts, entrepreneurship, education, trade, to strategic partnership and economic cooperation

between Kalinga and Indonesia. The experts would deliberate at length on deficit areas. The endeavour surely deserves commendation and I would like to congratulate its Chairman and everyone behind this endeavour for their thoughtful initiative and for inviting such a galaxy of distinguished personalities to this epoch making event. Earlier, I have been to an endeavour of Kalinga Lanka Foundation that is engaged to revive old linkage with the neighbouring island nation. I am thankful to the organisers for their invitation that again enables me to be part of a glorious beginning to a great cause.

When there is any talk or discussion on relation of Kalinga and India at large with Indonesia at any forum the name of late Biju Patnaik, the legendary leader and Odisha's illustrious son finds a celebrated place. He is always remembered for his significant role in the Indonesian freedom movement. Even today his brave acts aptly described as drama in real life leave us spellbound. Biju Babu, the intrepid pilot that he was, landing on an improvised airstrip and using left over petrol from abandoned Japanese military dumps, eluded the Dutch and flew back to Delhi with Mohammad Thatta and Sultan Shariar, the leaders of the Indonesian freedom struggle for holding discussions with Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel. The wide publicity given to the exploit gave a boost to the cause of Indonesian independence. A grateful Indonesia decorated late Biju Patnaik with its highest civilian honour ''Bhumiputra' in return for the bravery the daring Indian leader had displayed at its hour of crisis. Another coincidence comes when this dialogue for reviving mutual relation is initiated Odisha celebrates birth centenary of Biju Babu. On this occasion I pay my homage to this great son of Odisha.

Odisha and Indonesia share age-old historical and civilisational links. People of Kalinga were the pioneers in promoting Indian culture beyond India, particularly in Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar the then Burma. Indian traders, adventurers, teachers and priests were the dominating influence in Southeast Asia. History has evidences of Indian kings ruling these regions. Hinduism and Buddhism both spread to these regions from India and for many centuries existed there with

mutual toleration. Over time trade led to political and cultural relations. Besides cultural similarities, one also finds many peculiar similarities that still survive between the two lands.

On revival of socio-economic, cultural and people-to-people contact between the two lands warm relations and mutual understanding would be reinforced. These special bonds will be at the core of our friendship and cooperation. They will be the real drivers of our partnership; providing vitality and dynamism to our unique and multi-faceted relations. I believe that the destinies of these two lands are inter-linked amid so many similarities. Odisha has a vital stake in each other's wellbeing and prosperity.

Indonesia is one of India's most valued partners in our Act East Policy. Our bilateral relations are rich in potential. As two large democracies and major emerging economies, we have many convergent interests and responsibilities in bilateral, regional and global forums. As maritime neighbours along one of the most critical sea links in the world, both of us also have shared interests in maritime security.

The people of Odisha are now engaged in a historic undertaking of achieving progress and the Government encourages investment and infrastructure building and ensuring that benefits reach to the common people. The fast economic transformation that is taking place in Odisha presents unprecedented opportunities for the people of Indonesia. We invite Indonesia to be a part of Odisha's growth story and vice versa. Together we can and must achieve the full potential of our ever-expanding mutually beneficial cooperation. Together we have to prioritize areas of our common interest – including trade, mutual investments, security, agriculture, hydro-power, tourism, infrastructure development and air and sea connectivity projects. Our commitment must be to leverage our resources and expertise for the progress of our people.

Today, our youth have the opportunities to realize their aspirations. It is our sacred duty to equip and facilitate their pursuit of economic prosperity and development. Higher education is one such

area where a lot of positive things are at stake. Odisha has emerged as a Higher Education Hub in Eastern India. We must explore options of facilitating linkages among educational institutions and encourage partnerships in teaching, training and research. On the challenges of establishment of Chairs of Indian and Indonesian Studies in each other's universities expansion of scholarships is taken up. Odisha must take the initiative and consider setting up centers for studies on Odisha in universities in Indonesia. These would be important steps in increasing awareness not just about the strong historical ties, but the significance of strengthening the bilateral relationship.

However, I feel that in spite of the numerous synergies the relationship is far from fulfilling its potential. Here it is appropriate that we must seek to balance historical links with current and future interests.

Friends, before concluding, I would like to state that Kalinga-Indonesia and Indo-Indonesian friendship on a larger canvas is our priority. Our partnership is based on trust and respect for each other's interests and concerns. There is every reason to believe that the scope is much more and a closer cooperation will be beneficial for both the countries. Let us build the bridges of co-operation between the two nations earnestly and with renewed vigour. I attach great importance to this innovative Kalinga-Indonesia Dialogue as an opportunity to build on the momentum and to add further content to our relationship. With these words, I wish very fruitful and productive deliberations for scripting a profitable and meaningful partnership with Indonesia and consolidating enduring friendship. I wish Kalinga-Indonesia Dialogue all success.

Jai Hind.

Closing Ceremony of 10th International Olympiad in Astronomy & Astrophysics

I am delighted to be with you all today at the closing ceremony of 10th International Olympiad in Astronomy and Astrophysics. I feel very happy to address this celebratory event where wonderful accomplishments of our young students from across the globe are being witnessed. I am happy to extend my good wishes to the participants and all the accompanying leaders and observers from different countries.

Today's event gains enough significance since it is held in the land where famous Samanta Chandrasekhar called Pathani Samanta was born. He was known for Naked eye astronomy. His observations were completely non-telescopic, and made with handmade instruments – and the accuracy achieved seems extraordinary. He was an outstanding scholar though his efforts in Astronomy were quite intuitive. His book Siddhanta Darpana finds mentions in the European and American press way back in 1899. He remains an inspiration for our budding astronomers and astrophysicists. Secondly, Odisha has earned the proud distinction of hosting the Olympiad which is first of its kind in Eastern India. NISER has done a tremendous amount of work in hosting this prestigious event. I would like to congratulate this premier institute for having successfully organised this prestigious event and thereby making Odisha proud.

The Olympiad, which, since 2007, has been giving thousands of higher secondary school students the chance to showcase their skills and many have received credits, distinctions and medals. It is heartening to note our country's notable performance in every edition of the Olympiad and I am told that it is consistently ranked in top 2 for all the years of full participation a remarkable achievement.

To most outsiders, astronomy and astrophysics is unknown territory. Its borders are protected by dense thickets of technical terms; its landscapes are a mass of hard equations and incomprehensible

concepts. Few realize that the world of astronomy and astrophysics is rich with vivid images and challenging ideas.

Astronomy is all around us. Just look up! Who has not looked at the night sky and wondered at the twinkling and movement of stars there? We are all aware of the motion of the Sun through the sky during the day and the changing phases of the Moon at night. The motions of astronomical objects determine the day-night cycle, the seasons of the year, the tides, the timing of eclipses, and the visibility of comets and meteor showers. Easily observed astronomical events have formed the basis for time keeping, navigation, and myths or sagas in cultures around the world.

In the decades ahead, the pace of discovery—remarkable as it has been over the past—will accelerate. Astronomers stand poised to examine the epoch when galaxies similar to our Milky Way first took form, to image Earth-like planets beyond our solar system, and to learn whether some show evidence of life. To take these next steps will require significant investments of both imagination and public resources.

Because the magnitude of these investments will be large, it is fair to ask why astronomical research should merit such support. Perhaps the most persuasive, but least quantifiable, justifications lie in the importance has always attached to exploring new frontiers, and in the deep human desire to understand how we came to be, the kind of universe we live in, whether we are alone, and what our ultimate fate will be. Exploring frontiers of unimaginable mystery and beauty, astronomy speaks compellingly to these fundamental questions.

As researchers, astronomers experience the excitement of discovery most vividly and are the first to glimpse new answers to ancient questions. As a community of citizens fortunate to live in a society that supports them generously, astronomers believe strongly that "from those to whom much is given, much is asked." It is in that spirit it is hoped for more tangible contributions from astronomy's and astrophysics to broader societal goals.

Let me congratulate the young participants in this Olympiad for their great interest and passion to study this exciting, wonderful and challenging discipline, study the Cosmos and solving the mysteries of our Universe that will stretch their imagination to explore new conclusion. Finding new conclusion is always pleasant. It is said- Astronomy excites the imagination.

Astrophysics strikes me as one of the most exciting areas of research today. Thanks to new observations, better methods and more powerful simulations that one can now hope to answer, with reasonable confidence, some of the most profound questions ever raised. Astronomy has emerged forever from the old books of mythology to assert itself as an exact science, an unclouded crystal ball of the universe.

I see the most significant contribution of Astronomers and Astrophysicists to society primarily is in the area of science education in raising public awareness of science, conveying scientific concepts to students at all levels and to their teachers, and contributing to educating a technically capable and aware citizenry. Astronomy is relevant to each of these goals, and it can act as a pathfinder in stimulating people's interest in all of science. Planetariums and observatories are popular visitor destinations to broaden knowledge. For school children or parent, a visit may be their introduction to a dark night sky and to the wonders of the universe.

The national science education standards as developed specify age-appropriate content goals for the teaching of science. It suggests an emphasis on the teaching of science as inquiry. Engaging students in the active process of inquiry can help them to develop a deeper understanding of both scientific concepts and the nature of science. Through inquiry, students can gain an appreciation of how we know what we know about science. Astronomy lends itself extraordinarily well to inquiry-based teaching and allows teachers to take advantage of the natural fascination students have with the field.

Astronomy and Astrophysics are a cumulative discipline. They are wonderful, exciting and challenging. Dear participants,

you represent the best examples of achievement in astronomy and astrophysics at the school level. However, the fact remains that we need to focus on how to revamp the teaching of astronomy and astrophysics in schools so that they will be relevant and interesting to students' lives.

May you continue to make us proud and make yourselves proud and may you return from here with a renewed dedication to ensuring that your talents are used for the continued progress of your nation and the world at large. By the 10th Olympiad it is clear that this international event is now a mature event to give energy and to motivate talented students for further study and research in astronomy. Let this event be the cradle of prominent scientists.

In closing, I wish to once again applaud the great and tireless work of the Executive Committee of the Olympiad and of the NISER. I wish them the very best.

Jai Hind.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Platinum Jubilee celebration of Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Wing

I am happy to be with you all today in this Peace Conference organised to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee celebration of Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Wing. It is always a great pleasure to be amongst the youth who are our future and strength. I extend my good wishes to you all and congratulate the members of Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Wing on the completion of 75 years of its glorious existence. I am given to understand that Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Wing was formed by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad in 1938. Since then it has grown from strength to strength and spreads throughout the country and also to over 200 countries.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Wing in India renders splendid service to the youth of the country irrespective of caste, creed and religion. This pluralistic approach is always commendable. In Odisha it has been organising several programmes focused on integral youth development and also holding blood donation camps and medical camps and providing relief and assistance to victims at the time of natural calamities. I am given to understand that the Ahamadiyya community in Odisha is more than a century old. I find the Peace Conference organized on this memorable occasion aims at making youth an enlightened positive force in promoting peace and strengthening the secular fabric of our great nation.

I would like to congratulate the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Wing on noble decision to hold a Peace Conference to mark the Platinum Jubilee celebration. Holding a Peace Conference in Odisha is very appropriate as the land has been preaching the message of peace and brotherhood from the time of Emperor Asoka, who renounced violence here and embraced Buddhism.

Peace is a necessity and considering the surrounding environment and events taking place around the globe it makes us believe strongly that we need to do something fast so that peace prevails and it has to prevail to make life enjoyable and meaningful.

It is surprising that we all seek peace yet, it keeps eluding us. Why it is so? In our effort to obtain peace, we often do what destroys it. Instead of seeking inner peace, we seek how to impose peace on others. And this just doesn't work. Peace is a gift one can give to others and to himself as well. We must realize that peace is a journey, not an end.

Peace is present everywhere. If one seeks peace with a sincere heart, one can certainly find it. Sometimes, one needs some deep thoughts to bring him/her peace. Sometimes, just a good book dealing with the topic of peace or a peace conference like this does exactly the same bringing one to realize the importance of peace for self and society. One can find peace but one has to know where to look.

India, the abode of peerless spiritual seers and sages and of divine devotees, has been glorified for its untiring efforts in elevating humanity to the pinnacle of human perfection and nobility. They have always strived to uphold the supremacy of secularism, spiritualism and peaceful co-existence and have held at bay cultural and materialistic winds that have threatened to destroy the basic ethos of this sacred land.

India is a wonderful country with so much diversity. It is home to so many languages, cultures and religions. Yet this diversity brings us together instead of dividing us. We have a great tradition of celebrating all our festivals with each other that strengthens our social fabric. We are the brightest living example to the rest of the world with our unity in diversity. That is of course our true strength. We are a Socialist, Secular and Democratic Republic pledged to secure all its citizens justice, liberty and equality, and to promote among them fraternity, celebrating the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation. The country stands committed to a policy of non-interference in religious matters.

Our tradition teaches tolerance, our philosophy preaches tolerance and our Constitution practices tolerance. Let us not dilute it. It is the attitude that makes the difference. We must respect our diversity and consolidate our common identity as Indians fortified by

a shared commitment to putting an end to divisive sentiments and prejudices. We must understand that violence is no way to a solution; rather peace is the only solution to any problem and brings everyone together. We have inherited an India from our ancestors with so many beautiful colours on its canvas and it is our important task to create Indians who can transcend all divisive barriers and identify with the cause of nation-building. I am optimistic that peace will prevail and it is only possible if our youth are convinced and determined not to be part of any kind of violence and repose their faith in peace. We should teach our children on how important peace is for all of us so that they grow with right attitudes burying all kinds of intolerance.

Here, I would like to say that the organisers are no doubt doing a noble thing of empowering the youth of the country. There should be greater networking among other youth organizations to reach out to the youth. One should look beyond oneself and serve the community, the society and the country.

Let us be secular in our thoughts, words and deeds. Let us continue to take pride in our diversity and proudly say we are Indian. I am confident that this Peace Conference will ignite the torches of future peace and achieve its objective of promoting peaceful co-existence among the members of different religions and be another noble endeavour aimed at fostering peace. With these words, I wish Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Wing all success in their future endeavours.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of Buddha Mahotsav-2015

I am indeed delighted to visit this widely acclaimed traditional Buddhist and handloom cluster viliage of the State and participate in the Buddha Mahotsav on the auspicious occasion of Buddha Purnima. At the outset, I seek blessings of Lord Buddha for the wellbeing of our State and Nation. I also take this opportunity to convey my good wishes to you all.

It is a matter of great pride that Buddhism had a chequered history in Odisha. It is noteworthy that two trading merchants of this land were among the first disciples of Lord Buddha. Over 2200 years ago, an Emperor Ashoka being disillusioned by the senseless bloodshed in the historic Kalinga War embraced Buddhism and became Dharmashoka from Chandashoka. This incident is a memorable landmark in the history of not only India but also the whole world. He spread the message of Lord Buddha to several parts. The Buddhist monuments and archival remains found in several places of the State bear silent testimony to the flourishing of Buddhism and Buddhist learning. The excavation work has exposed the remains of sprawling Buddhist civilization. However, history has miles to go to unravel the ground realities of these places of importance.

Lord Gautam Buddha like other prophets belong to the whole world and his message is truly universal. The methods adopted by him for dissemination of his message helped in the spread of Buddhism. He tried to fight an evil by goodness and hatred by love. The world today needs his message of love, tolerance and universal peace more than ever before.

Buddhism propagates casteless society based on equal rights. To be happy in the present life one should practice the ethics of morality, non-violence, equality and universal brotherhood. This is an eternal truth taught by Lord Buddha. The great Mathematician

Sir Albert Einstein once said "Buddhism will be the future religion of the world". Great Indians like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindra Nath Tagore and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar acknowledged the perennial wisdom of Buddhism.

The present-day world has been much affected by the impact of violence and peace and harmony in the lives of ordinary people has been continuously shattered in different communities. How do we build a sustainable world without violence? That is something we have to seriously think of. We should try to build a society based on the themes of peace and non-violence and strive to foster a culture of non-violence. The world has recognized the power of non-violence and the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi is celebrated worldwide as International Day of Non-Violence. Equality and Non-Violence are very much required for healthy relationship and this is taught by Lord Gautam Buddha.

The Noble Eightfold Path unfolds the path for the end of suffering, as it was laid out by Siddhartha Gautama. It is a practical guideline to ethical and mental development with the goal of freeing the individual from attachments and delusions; and it finally leads to understanding the truth about all things. Together with the Four Noble Truths it constitutes the gist of Buddhism. Great emphasis is put on the practical aspect, because it is only through practice that one can attain a higher level of existence and finally reach Nirvana. The eight aspects of the path are not to be understood as a sequence of single steps, instead they are highly interdependent principles that have to be seen in relationship with each other.

Devotion is not the main path in Buddhist belief, but practice of right canons. The Buddhists should be encouraged to observe Buddhist Precepts that can help to cultivate compassion, generosity and contentment.

One may accept Buddhism as a way of life and as a socio-ethical code. Buddhism's insistence on love, peace, non-violence, brotherhood and self-enquiry has immense values, which will definitely give healing effect to this strife torn world. I am sure,

the Buddha Mahotsav here will enliven the Buddhist culture and heritage and will instill spirit of love and goodwill amongst the humanity.

I am happy that the Buddha Mahotsav here is celebrated with great devotion and enthusiasm. It is quite laudable that the festival brings together people of goodwill from all walks of life to disseminate the message of Lord Buddha.

It is indeed heartening to note that Maniabandha is enriched with weaving and Buddhism. This handloom cluster village has got a worldwide reputation for exquisite handloom clothes and sarees in particular. The state of Odisha, earlier known as UTKAL is the land where art excels. Maniabandha truly upholds the legacy and the richness of weaving art which is reflected on the exquisite handloom clothes. The vibrant coloured clothes made for Lord Jagannath has given the place a unique identity. I am given to understand that a number of Weavers Co-operative Societies are doing successful enterprise with collection and sale outlets and contribute to improve the quality of production of handloom fabrics of the area. However, our artisans need more support and exposure to show their skill and magic in hand and for their economic development. Better marketing facility, communication and infrastructure development of the village and linkage to tourism will be fitting to promote the uniqueness of this village.

I am sure the Buddhist Interpretation Centre inaugurated today will be a great boost to attract visitors to this village which is not only famous for weaving and the art of tie and dye but also for having a large number Buddha temples.

With these words, I once again thank the organizers for their invitation and wish the Buddha Mahotsav a grand success. "Let Lord Buddha bless us all".

Jai Hind.

2nd Regional Conference of the Theosophical Order of Service, Odisha Region

Today I am happy to come over to a conference of The Theosophical Order of Service, an organisation which is committed to lessen the sufferings of living beings. The pioneering contributions made by Dr. Annie Besant in building and expanding The Theosophical Order of Service as an international organisation are truly remarkable.

I understand that this is the 2nd Regional Conference organised by the Odisha Region of the organisation. It is interesting to find that the conference has the theme - "Towards the New World". I congratulate the organisers for the theme they have chosen and the outcome of deliberation, I am sure, will be meaningful to one and every one.

The very word 'New World' does excite us. There are few of us who have a tendency to speak frequently of "the New World." When doing so, we tend to be a bit ambiguous as to what the New World is. Is it something different from the existing world and if yes in which way? Many philosophers and world leaders have set forth their perception of New World. Individuals like Annie Besant are often seen as the voices of reason that may be the guiding force for building a New World.

Theosophy literally means "God's wisdom" and it is all about hidden knowledge or wisdom that offers individual enlightenment and salvation. The goal of theosophy is to explore the origin of divinity, humanity and the world. The Theosophical Society was founded with the motto, "There is no Religion higher than Truth". The three primary characteristics of theosophy is : Divine/Human/Nature Triangle, Primacy of the Mythic and Access to Supreme Worlds that means to the awakening within and the ability to connect and explore all levels of reality; co-penetrate the

human with the divinity and nature. The objective that was later modified by founding member Helena Petrovna Blavatsky is primarily to form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour. Second is to encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy, and Science and third is to investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man. It is incumbent upon us that we renew our effort to make theosophy and the Theosophical Order of Service a part of the mainstream of human society and the guiding light towards the New World.

Here let me quote former President of USA, John F Kennedy who said, "I think that we could agree on what kind of a world we want to build. It would be a world which demanded of each government that it accepts its responsibility to ensure social justice. It would be a world of constantly accelerating economic progress - not material welfare as an end on of itself, but as a means to liberate the capacity of every human being to pursue his talents and to pursue his hopes. It would, in short, be a world that we would all be proud to have built".

Theosophy has given rise to and influenced development of many mystical, philosophical, and religious movements. Theosophical Societies and Organizations are doing very good work across the globe sensitising the community.

It is indeed a great joy for each one of us to live in this beautiful world. A sense of wonder pervades the entire earth and a sensitive mind appreciates the internal beauty and magnificent abundance of the creation. Watching nature one is aware of the presence of an overwhelmingly benevolent force and presence which is ever-present and ever-beckoning. Looking around at others, young and old, one sees beautiful manifestations of this same life-source.

However, the overwhelming tragedy of our world today lies in the fact that we remain disconnected from our sense of belonging to a benevolent universe. On the contrary, we constantly strive to

turn the earth into a realm of fear, exploitation, injustice intolerance and an on-going violence that blinds us to the truth that is ever-present. Thinking that we can have a world of peace, joy, social justice and freedom for ourselves while we viciously destroy the peace and freedom of others exposes how we are disconnecting from one another and how all our efforts become ironic and absurd.

While on one side the world has progressed rapidly, on the other side the gap between the rich and the poor has widened substantially and poverty is very much an issue and that we need to address. A second area which we need to address is the area of intolerance towards others. We have no love for each other nor are we are concerned about others. Human selfishness and greed do not allow room for those who are weak and vulnerable to exist as equals within our society. Everyone is craving for peace but peace eludes us.

If this is the kind of situation that we are in, then what is the solution? True transformation in any society can only come about when there is a transformation of heart. This transformation of heart cannot come about with all the information we have and with the so-called progress we claim. Though we have the knowledge and think that we can change society through our will power we are not in a position to do so. We may also use our intellect to diagnose what the problem is, but are not in a position to bring out the corrective measures in our society. It is in this kind of context that we must transform ourselves, which in turn will help us to transform our society and build the new world we wish. Mahatma Gandhiji had well said and I quote, "Be the change you want to see."

The door is open. The beautiful world is calling us- one and every one. Will we hear her call and stop doing destruction and stop doing harm to others and to environment? We are all infinitely interconnected through manifestations of boundless, radiant love and we have to discover and allow this love to shine and flow through us, in the lives we live and also in the lives of others. From this awareness will arise a sense of understanding for good and for

noble things? Let me quote Dr. Anne Besant and she said, "In those who cannot be happy while others are miserable; in those whose meals are rendered bitter by starvation of the poor; in those whose luxury is a burden because of the want of the miserable – in those will you find the burden of the new civilisation, those who shall sacrifice that others may be happy."

Theosophy basically highlights the importance of the idea of universal brotherhood of mankind and the cardinal truths inherent in all religions. My best wishes to all gathered here and the organizers for their efforts in organizing the conference. With these words, I hope there will be very productive deliberations and wish the conference all success.

Jai Hind.

Spiritual Conference on the theme
Godly Rajayoga for Healthy and Happy Living

I am happy to be here with you today for the Birth Centenary celebration of Dadi Dr. Janki, Chief of Brahma Kumaris and this Centenary is being celebrated with a Spiritual Conference under the theme: Godly Rajayoga for Healthy and Happy Living by the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, Odisha State.

It is noteworthy that there have always been dedicated souls whose love for and commitment to God seem to shine through so greatly that others around them notice, and Dadi Dr. Janki is such a person. As one of the foremost teachers of Rajayoga, her words of wisdom sustained many lives through difficult times and it continues to do so. She evoked the vision of a peaceful, united and just, healthy and happy global family. This is what will continue to inspire others in meeting the challenge and achieve a better life for all. Her testimony will continue to stand as a beacon, a light to illuminate and enrich many lives. On this occasion I pray for her long life and good health in the service of humanity.

In this spiritual conference you have chosen two very important issues to deliberate that is healthy and happy life. Who does not want to be healthy and happy in this world? Everyone is craving for that. Diet and exercise are no doubt important, but mind and soul play a big part in making one healthy and happy in true sense. If we wish to remain healthy we should pay attention to balance both mental and physical health for our overall well-being and to enjoy life fully understanding its true meaning.

Spirituality is an integral part of both life and healing. Religious beliefs form one level of spirituality. But then there is another level of spirituality. That is what I call basic spirituality -- basic human qualities of goodness, kindness, compassion, caring. I personally consider this second level of spirituality to be more important than the first.

While the real goal of spiritual path is the same for all, there are many different roads that one can travel. Also the goal may be described in different terms. This is so because we all have different starting points and different preferences and opportunities.

I appreciate that institutions like Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University are engaged in this task truthfully and purposefully influencing the world positively with their various enlightening programmes and enabling many to a journey that nourishes mind, body and soul. Brahma Kumaris' Rajayoga is a practice that aims at purifying oneself by realizing one's identity as soul and maintaining a state of communion with the Creator of the universe.

We are marvellously designed by God. He made us in a way that all our body systems work together in unimaginable and intricate ways. Our soul, spirit, mind and body are all connected and work together perfectly according to His design. Because we are designed by God, when we live according to His principles as outlined in our holy scriptures, our life becomes full and we are more likely to experience a life of peace, joy and hope. This will create an environment that favours good health and happiness as well.

I believe that the very purpose of our life is to seek happiness and wellness. We are all seeking something better in life. So, I think, the very motion of our life is towards happiness. But is happiness a reasonable goal for most of us? Is it really possible? Yes. I believe that happiness can be achieved through disciplining mind and nourishing it with spiritual awakening. After all, it is the mind where the battle starts leaving everything in disorder. It is therefore important to identify the causes which lead to happiness and those which lead to suffering. Then one has to find out remedies to eliminate those causes which lead to suffering and cultivating those which lead to happiness.

As in the treatment of all diseases, the cure begins with acknowledging the problem. Stress has been identified as a leading cause of many health problems. Being largely psychological, rather than physical in origin they are much more difficult to prevent and find remedy. Modern stress affects nearly all of us at some point in our

lives. Regardless of its origins, stress drains our physical, emotional and mental energy.

Technology has led to phenomenal advances in medicine and has given us the ability to prolong life. However, in the past few decades physicians have attempted to balance their care by reclaiming medicine's more spiritual roots, recognizing that until modern times spirituality was often linked with health care. After all, spiritual care serves the whole person—the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual.

As long as there is a lack of inner discipline that brings calmness of mind, no matter what external facilities or conditions you have, they will never give you the feeling of joy and happiness that you are seeking for your body and soul. On the other hand, if you possess this inner quality, a calmness of mind, a degree of stability within, then even if you lack various external facilities that you would normally consider necessary for happiness, it is still possible to live a happy and joyful life.

Life is not about the big things which our minds ponder but the little ways we make for life to be smooth and fufilling. There is no better journey than living a healthy and happy life. It is something one can accomplish with a little time, effort, and self-support. There is no such thing as ultimate perfection, but it is possible to gain what is perfect for one to find happiness and good health. It is hard to get living wrong as long as one is able, mindful, and willing to be strong. One's spirit is boundless and unlimited. Spiritual awakening makes life worth living. To be able to generate and sustain inner power one needs an attitude, vision, and perception and awakening through Rajayoga as propagated by Brahma Kumaris is one such path that leads to generate and sustain inner power with right attitude and vision. This conference, I am sure, can free many from several illusions and misconceptions and give a strong perspective on values of Rajayoga and its practice. With these words, I wish the conference all success.

Jai Hind.

Christmas Celebration organized by Bhubaneswar Christian Community

I am delighted to address you at this time of the year as we are preparing to celebrate the birth of the infant Jesus who was born on Christmas Day some 2,000 years ago. This is the second year in succession I am with you participating in celebration of Christmas organized by Bhubaneswar Christian Community. I am happy to extend Christmas greetings to you and your families.

Christmas comes but once a year, it is that time of year again. December has come and with it all the joys of Christmas and with it the long lists for gifts and cards to be bought and given. This is also the time for delicious cake and carols. When Christmas comes there is still the same warm feeling that I had as a child, the same warmth that enfolds our hearts and our homes. Christmas Season encapsulates the feeling of joy, love and goodwill.

But what is the real meaning of Christmas? Is it the gifts under the tree, the lights in the windows, the cards in the mail, turkey dinners with family and friends, stockings hanging in the living room, and shouts of "Merry Christmas" to those who pass us in the streets? Is this really Christmas?

For many people, Christmas is of course a time of sorrow. They don't have the extra money to buy presents for their children, family, and friends. Celebration may be only a wish and not a reality for some.

Yet, Christmas is a season of great joy. It is a time of God showing His great love for us. We celebrate the birth of Jesus. God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world. His birth brought great joy to the world. Shepherds, wise men, and angels all shared in the excitement of knowing about this great event. They knew this was no ordinary baby. The prophets had told of His coming hundreds of years before. The star stopped over Bethlehem just to mark the way for those who were looking for this special child.

Let us ask ourselves. Why did Jesus come? Humanity was lost in sin and groving in darkness. Humanity was estranged from the maker. God sent His Son to reconcile humanity with divinity and humanity with humanity.

Here if I may ask whether Jesus's message has any relevance in present time, the response might be to point out that He lived more than 2000 years ago and to ask, how could he be relevant? He never had the privileges of modern world. He never went to college. He never wrote a book. His travels went no farther than about 60 miles from his hometown of Nazareth, in an occupied region of Galilee. He seemed to have lacked diplomacy because he offended the establishment with his teachings and so was arrested, tried, condemned and crucified as a criminal when he was only about 33 years old.

How could such a person have anything of relevance to say to us in this challenging, advanced, exciting and sometimes frightening 21st century?

May be we should first ask, "What is our greatest need?" Getting a new car? Getting to Mars? Getting more money? We seem to always need more. Are those really our needs?

May be a more thoughtful response would be, "finding peace in our violence-torn world, eliminating hunger, poverty, injustice and crime." Meeting those needs calls for wisdom in our actions and reactions. From personal satisfaction to universal harmony, human relationships are involved, and that is precisely where Jesus becomes the most relevant teacher on Earth.

When we celebrate His advent, we remember the angelic announcement : Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and goodwill toward men. His greeting was "peace," his promise was "peace," and his achievement was "peace" with God and neighbour; a victory enjoyed by those who follow his way of love.

Before we dismiss the word "love" as non-existing, it might be helpful to recognize that no motivation is more powerful, more healing or more relevant to human relations than the generous, selfless love taught and demonstrated by Jesus. Like it or not, the need for

forgiveness and reconciliation among people can only be achieved by a genuine commitment to that kind of gracious love. We are not called to ignore evil. We are called to overcome evil with good, with actions of love, guided and empowered by God's Spirit. That is the only way to peace.

On the subject of relevance, there is one more thing that is a 'for sure'. We all die. What, therefore, could be more relevant than trusting the one who has taken care of this universal problem? By the death and resurrection of Jesus, God has conquered both sin and death. Jesus' way of love leads to joy and peace in how we live and how we die. Now, that is relevant!

As we have always lived together in unity and solidarity throughout history, we shall continue to regard the diversities in our country as a source of richness; and we shall continue to build up the future together on the basis of respect for each other. Christmas encourages us to look out for one another, to comfort those who suffer to give hope to the most vulnerable among us, and to strive for a better, more just world for everyone.

As the Holy Christmas is round the corner, let the message of Jesus, who is light in the midst of darkness, echoes once more from the Crib of Bethlehem in our ears and re-echoes in our hearts with an ever new freshness of joy and piety. After all, it is a message which lights up with heavenly truth a world that is plagued in darkness by prejudice, ignorance, distrust, errors and indifferences. It infuses cheerful and trustful joy into mankind, torn by the anxiety of deep, bitter sorrow. It promises mercy, love, peace to those in suffering and tribulation who see their happiness shattered and their efforts broken in the turbulent strife and hate of our stormy days.

The very Christian values of giving, sharing and taking care of others are eternal. This Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of Christ with friends, families and neighbours, let us think about those in need in the next door, and in our society.

As we set to celebrate the birth of Christ amongst family and friends and come to the close of 2015, I urge you to embrace the

enduring love and peace of the season now and into the new year with the purpose of the perfecting the quality of life of the people. Look at Christmas in a new way this year. This is the time to invite Jesus into your heart. You will then have a "Merry Christmas." The joy and peace you will receive will last all year as you look to God for all your needs to be met.

May your season be filled with the promise of Christmas, for Christmas is the season of peace. I extend to you very best wishes for merry Christmas and a happy New Year. May Almighty God Bless you all, and permit his benign influence to fall upon you, your family and the entire universe now and forevermore.

Jai Hind.

Christian Youth Festival -2016

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I am indeed delighted to be in your midst this evening to join you on the inauguration of the Christian Youth Festival-2016. At the outset, I take this opportunity to convey greetings to all of you who are assembled here.

I am given to understand that this Church is one of the oldest Churches in Odisha with chequered history in the service of social and religious transformation of the state. The Church also has the unique privilege of producing many illustrious personalities in its long journey namely Rai Bhadur Samuel Das, I.C.S, Padma Shri Issac Santra, the famous Leprosy cure Specialist, Air Marshal P.K. Santra, Dr. M.K. Pramanik who was Industrial Advisor to GOI, Dr. B.K. Pramanik, the Chief Executive of the Bible Society of India and Prof. D.K. Behera, the present Vice Chancellor of Berhampur University and several others. Let us thank God for his continued blessings upon this Church.

The theme of this Festival is- "The Role of Christian Youth in Nation Building."

Unity and diversity is the bedrock of Indian polity. There are several religious communities in the country and Christian community is one of them. As citizens of this great country, the Christian youths have an important role in the nation building. What kind of role should the Christians in general and youth in particular play in nation building activities? What is the Christian view of the society or the nation which is to be established on earth? While we pray, we always say "Your Kingdom come." Our prayer, which I understand correctly, must be our concern to establish the Kingdom of God on earth now and with its fulfilment in the future. In the Bible we find that after the rebellion of Satan (Ezek 28:17) the earth fell into the usurper. Thus the will of God could not be done on earth as in heaven. Hence, God created man with the intention of recovering the earth for Himself. (Gen 1:26-28). After the fall of man, Christ came to bring the heavenly

rule to earth so that the earth could be recovered for God's interest, so that the will of God could be done on earth as in heaven.

Is it not incumbent on us, as Christians, to play our role to restore our society, where peace and harmony and goodwill prevail? Our actions, our approaches and our examples should demonstrate Christian character and Christian values. We should see that God's will and purpose to be fulfilled in our lives and life of our families, according to his eternal plan.

Secondly, The Christian Youth is called upon to remember his creator in the days of their youth. Eccl. 12:1. "Remember your creator in the days of your youth, before evil days come and years draw near of which you will say, I have no pleasure in them." In the days of one's youth, how so few remember the creator, and how so few are saved. Remembering our creator means acting in the way he intended us to act when he created us. He has given us life and opportunities that come with youth. In youth, life appears all bright; if there is rain, sunshine quickly follows; but it is not so in old age; clouds that return after rain; similarly, the mind loses its power of recovery and cheerfulness.

My dear young friends, this is the most propitious time for all of you to display your talents in the service of the nation and for your God. Remember your creator in the days of your youth.

Thirdly, let us see what we as Christians do? Matthew 6:33. "But seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." We are fully aware of the various factors involved in Nation Building activities. Before we start our participation in the nation building efforts, Christians are called upon to first seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. In other words, our topmost priority should be to first seek the Kingdom of God. It means that we must seek earnestly to have the rule and power of God demonstrated in our lives and assemblies. All reformations and transformations are possible only through the mighty power of the Holy Spirit. The Bible assures us that when we first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, not only his Kingdom and His

righteousness given to them, but also all that they need will be added to them.

Fourthly, " You are made for a Mission."

John 17:18. "As you sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." This refers to a commission which He carried out on the Cross. So he sent them to preach and live the Cross. The Father sent the Son into the world with Himself as life and everything to them. It means he breathed the Holy Spirit into them. By His breathing into them, He entered as the Spirit into the disciples to abide in them forever. Hence, wherever His disciples were sent, He was always with them. God is always working in the society of this great country-India. As Christians, your ministry is your service to believers and your mission is your service to unbelievers. You have a purpose in life to fulfil God's mission on this earth. This Christian Youth Festival is also a God's mission which you are to execute.

Since, this is a festival that focuses on youth, it would be more appropriate to dwell on the problems and challenges before the youth of this country. India is a young nation with a very young population, in fact 65% of the population is below the age of 35. The nation is emerging from the shadow of underdevelopment to the centre stage of progress. There are more and better avenues and opportunities for the younger generation to take advantage of the economic vibrancy of the present period. In a situation like this there are bound to be contradictions in the socio-economic-moral-ethical-political fields. Such a development is but natural in a vibrant and youthful nation. Hence, I would like to deal the problem from a simple and positive perspective.

Now, let me begin with a quote, in fact an aboriginal proverb that translates as, "We are all visitors to this time, this place. We are just passing through. Our purpose here is to observe, to learn, to grow, to love .... And then we return home." In this aboriginal knowledge, or rather wisdom, the essence of all great philosophy, faith and religion is hidden. First, we observe and then we learn, then we grow, and we spread the aroma of love. As you know, the process of observation,

learning, growth and love is not an end in itself as we pass one stage to enter another phase in life, the process continues throughout. By learning you grow. What indeed is meant by this particular expression, 'growth'? To me it is growth of human potential in all its glory; physical, material and moral. Growth in one or two dimensions will always be incomplete. Tell me, what value is physical growth if it is bereft of any material growth? And what use is material growth if it is bereft of any moral and ethical growth? So you would – or rather your growth would always remain incomplete. Here, I would like to tell you about the 19th century American industrialist, Andrew Carnegie who had come to America from England and he did not have any formal school education. However, he built an industrial empire on the edifice of hard work, honesty and ethics. When Carnegie started ageing, he began donating his personal wealth to charity and educational institutions and libraries! When quizzed about such magnanimity, Carnegie had famously replied, "The first half of my life was spent earning many and the second half would be spent on spending it!" But then, where from Carnegie derived so much inspiration to distribute all his wealth? The answer is in the aboriginal proverb and that is, love! Love for neighbour, love for society, love for the deprived sections of society and irrepressible love for mankind in general had inspired him to make huge contributions. Student, researchers and libraries in different parts of the world have been benefitting from his contributions even today! So it would be really wise for all of you to learn, then grow and finally love. All great faiths and religions have preached love, truth, honesty and compassion; but most humans have always deviated from this proclaimed path and preferred to be lured by all negative forces, such as hate, lust, jealousy, violence, selfishness and greed.

The joy of helping and giving can be acquired only when one is young. It cannot be cultivated when one is already grown up. Once one knows the art of loving others and the joys of giving, there is no way the habit would die down. Let me quote here what one well known author and preacher Charles Alexander Eastman had once said, "It was

our belief that the love of possessions is a weakness to be overcome … Children must early learn the beauty of generosity. They are taught to give what they prize most, that they may taste the happiness of giving. The Indians in their simplicity literarily give away all that they have – to relatives, to guests; but above all to the poor and the aged, from whom they can hope for no return."

I have been telling you about the virtues of love and the joys of giving. These two have the power to transform our society into a peaceful heaven governed by love, compassion and truth. Our time is characterized by so many things and trends that it is almost impossible to pinpoint on any particular phenomenon because many are in a transitional phase. However, human civilization's journey has always been characterized by a period of transition. Yet various transitional trends in the present 21st century have been characterized by hatred, intolerance, jealousy and parochialism as well as bigotry. In fact, while going through everyday's newspapers, I feel disappointed and saddened. Saddened because in recent times; not only in India, but also in different parts of the world because no single side is prepared to make the initial move to either surrender or make sacrifices. And results? Love and peace takes backseat, and negative forces come to the fore. Here let us ponder over what Martin Luther King, Jr.had said and I quote, "Now there is a final reason I think that Jesus says, "Love your enemies". It is this: that love has within it a redemptive power. And there is a power there that eventually transforms individuals. Just keep being friendly to that person. They react in many ways in the beginning. They react with guilt feelings, and sometimes they will hate you a little more at that transition period. And by the power of your love they will break down under the load." Love, my dear young friends, has this inherent power in it to subjugate the enemy armed with weapons of hatred.

At the outset, I had hinted at your challenges, challenges faced by the state and the nation and challenges faced by the youth against a global perspective. They are challenges which are general in nature and common to the youth everywhere, and there are challenges which

are nation and state specific. However, today is not the occasion to delve deep into all these. Yet we would see in brief about the challenges that confront you. In fact, these are also our challenges, everyone's challenges! And unless we understand the nature of these, we would never find solutions; and once challenges are left un-tackled today, they may metamorphose into bigger and complex challenges in future.

These twists and turns – in other words challenges – are to be tackled in a spirit that when we set out to do good, tackle the evil for the sake of good and when we are committed, God will always be on our side. And while doing good, faith in the Almighty be our guiding light. And when one sets out to do good, one should forget his/her religion. Doing good becomes the religion thereafter. Here I am reminded of one sarcastic observation by the famous British novelist, Jonathan Swift who had once remarked, "We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another!"

The present time –our time – is characterized by peculiar challenges born out of globalization, commercialization and massive industrialization resulting in massive displacement, exploitation of the weak, environmental hazards, increasing gap between the rich and poor, degeneration of values and ethics. This has caused immense harm to society in general and individual human being; and ultimately has resulted in child labour, child abuse, atrocities on woman, insensitivity towards the vulnerable, massive corruption etc. All these are the fallouts of moral and ethical degeneration. Other problems can be tackled by the Government through interventions but problems and challenges born out of moral degeneration cannot be tackled by Governments or NGOs or politicians! This is where we turn to scriptures and this is where we seek solace in faith and religion. That is why the wise have said when all else fails, the way is the way of the Almighty. The way to the Almighty is the way through the conscience. Unless this happens, we will always be miles away from conquering the challenges I just mentioned.

The frustrations of young people in the rural and remote tribal areas grew to exploding proportions especially when they see in the electronic media the possibilities of fortunes they have been denied for no fault of theirs. The public institution services meant for rural, poor and tribal people in most cases fail them. Ground realities indicate that political indifference, corruption, administrative negligence and callousness compound the situation. Millions of rural and tribal youth, out of whom many are illiterate or semi-literate have never moved out of their areas. They know nothing about the big things happening around the world. They have no idea of any socio-economic-philosophical permutations and combinations. These youths in India or in any part of the world are basically apolitical, simple and harmless youths, but many of them become easy targets of communal and criminal forces. Trafficking of both young boys and girls is reported from many areas. As I have hinted earlier, contrast this with most youths living in urban areas, enjoying the fruits of the economic boom. This social divide has led to a number of socio-economic issues that require immediate attention.

How come is it that the situation in our country is always peaceful? Why is it that despite problems here and there, by and large our youth are exceptional and unique, in the sense that majority of these disappointed, deprived and exploited youth are indeed those who come out in thousands to toil day in and out to help people in natural disasters. These are the youth who jump into flowing rivers to save lives and these are the youth who brave fire to save life and property! Why is it so? What is behind this phenomenon?

Because, majority of the youth in India believe in God. No, not majority, almost all of them are God-fearing and God-believers! This has two dimensions: (a) the youth being God fearing and God-loving in general would love to be like any other people who play good Samaritans (b) when values born out of being a believer in God are confronted with values of the market place born out commercialization, globalization and industrialization. So it is plain truth that the youth of today is confronted with and divided by these

two. The dilemma before them is a tough one. Accept th values and morals and reflect them in life; or be carried away by the newly created rules and values perpetrated by materialism.

This is where I believe is the root of the youth problem.

And this is where we the elders and organization like the Odisha Christian Youth Festival can and should play an effective role. People and organization which work for holistic development of the youth in Odisha as well as in India should join hands to guide, encourage and inspire the youth. Odisha Christian Youth Festival works for integral growth of each person. By integral growth, it is implied that it is the growth in every facet of life and personality such as spiritual, emotional, psychological, intellectual, social, physical and vocational growth. Odisha Christian Youth Festival seeks to draw young people to responsible participation in the life and mission for the Church. It empowers young people to perform so as to transform the world as disciples of Jesus Christ by living and working for harmony, justice, peace, love, equality and above all, development in every respect.

Today we need peace and harmony more than anything else, because if there is peace and harmony in our community, only then, India as a nation can go forward.

We all long to live in a world that is peaceful and harmonious, where we feel safe, secure, are loved, and can contribute to nation building as responsible citizens. To achieve this, we have to look at the "WAY". Let us be touched by Jesus and let us walk His Way.

I would like to conclude my address by quoting Erma Bombeck, a spiritual writer, "When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left, and could say, "I used everything you gave me".

So, I would urge the youth to use all their talent, ability and genius for self, society and nation.

Jai Hind.

LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Unveiling Statue of Swami Vivekananda

I am glad to be invited to unveil the statue of Swami Vivekananda on the noble occasion of Swamiji's 150th birth anniversary celebration and pay my deepest regards to Swamiji. As you know, Swamiji's 150th birth anniversary is now celebrated throughout the country. May the statue of Swamiji standing high on the pedestal serve as a reminder to every person of this institution that Swamiji's blessings are with one and all.

Swami Vivekananda, the great saint of India, considered spiritual and secular education of the poor and the deprived of our society as vital to nation building. Deeply pained by the condition of the poor brought about by crushing tyranny of castes and deprivation, Swamiji gave a clarion-call for the removal of ignorance from the teeming millions. According to Swamiji, any neglect of this is a great national sin. He said, "So long as millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them". He urged the better-offs to reach out to the masses going from village to village to impart to them a character-building education and to make sure well cared for. It is indeed very encouraging that Ramkrishna Mission, the monastic order founded by Swamiji himself, is deeply engaged in this pious task all across the country.

I am impressed by the educational infrastructure created by the Ramkrishna Mission, Hatamuniguda centre in a remote tribal area to bring quality education to the poor tribal children of Southern Odisha. I went around the school. This school is still in its formative stage and yet the quality of classrooms, the computer lab, the library and the science laboratories are indeed of a very high order and I am glad that our poor tribal boys, whose parents lack the means and resources, are benefiting from the quality education they are receiving here. Dear children, it is my advice to you to take full advantage of this opportunity to equip yourself in all respects to meet the challenges of the life that lies ahead successfully.

But while you engage with your lessons, it is even more important that you instill in yourself a deep sense of discipline and make it your second nature. Your discipline should be of the highest order, for, without discipline, all other developments may well be meaningless. Honesty, truthfulness, sincerity, loyalty to the institution, respect to elders and devotion to duty, besides other such attributes, are all fostered by discipline. The watch-word for you is character-building, for which personal discipline is absolutely vital.

According to Swamiji, learning concentration of mind is the basic method of learning. And concentration comes from purity and continence that I advise each one of you-students and teachers alike-to attain.

I urge the staff of this institution, particularly the teaching staff, o be guided and motivated by Swamiji's noble philosophy. Do not treat your task of teaching these children merely as a profession. Yours is a service that you owe to our children. The future of these children is in your hands and it is my expectation, as also of the parents, that you will shape these children as noble citizens of this country. And in this endeavour you have my best wishes.

Lastly, I thank the Secretary of this Centre for inviting me to this institution. And I am very happy to be with such fine children. These children are our country's future. I wish to assure the children that, if you work hard and be well disciplined, then a bright future beckons you. I wish them a very bright future and this Ramakrishna Mission School all success.

Jai Hind.

Release of Odia Translation of Novel KOTTA of Dr. M. Veerappa Moily

I am very happy to remain present on the occasion of the release of Odia translation of the novel Kotta written by the Moortidevi award winning novelist and Union Minister, Dr. M. Veerappa Moily. It is my pleasure to congratulate Dr, Moily as Kotta, one of his major novels about the life of the forest dwelling Koragas, a tribe residing in Karnataka, reaches readers of Odisha. I understand that this novel, which has earned wide acclaim, has already been translated into English, Russian, Hindi and several Indian languages. It is also produced as a telefilm in both Kannada and Hindi. These are substantial achievements and speak of the adulation of readers and viewers. Translation of major literary works is of great importance, as it promotes national integration. Because of translation, a literary text written in one language is read and appreciated by readers belong to other linguistic communities.

Creativity and translation are inseparable, especially in literary rendition. Creativity is without a doubt essential to all good translations, If translation is a creative act, it is yet unlike the writing of a novel in that it does not require that most difficult of creative feats, which is to create something from nothing. A novelist creates and peoples a world; a translator reports on that world to people who wouldn't otherwise have access to that world.

Translation is not merely a transformation of an original text into a literal equivalent; it must successfully convey the overall meaning of the original, including that text's cultural significance. Translation should keep all the text parameters unchanged as far as possible.

I convey my good wishes to the translator of this novel,Shri Mahendra Prasad who has done a commendable work and I am sure his effort will further enhance the popularity of this acclaimed novel.

Dr. Veerappa Moily has carved out a distinct identity for himself in public life and also in the literary sphere as a prolific writer. He strives to serve the people and enrich Indian literature simultaneously. In his personal life, he has struggle constantly against odds and overcome them to achieve success through perseverance and hard work. In a public life that spans over four decades, Dr. Moily has held several important posts and is presently the Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas. He has shown tremendous dedication, commitment and application. The other facet of his personality is his skill as a writer. As a writer, he has experimented with many forms of writing: novels, poems, essays and plays. For his magnum opus Shree Ramayana Mahanveshanam, he has been conferred with the coveted Moortidevi Award. His plays. novels and collections of poems have a distinct place of their own in Kannada and have been highly appreciated by readers. There have been great literary works in Kannada literature, right from ancient times, which have had a deep influence on Indian thought. I am told that Karnataka has the largest number of Jnanpith Award winners, besides the recipients of many Sahitya Academy awards.

I find that Dr. Moily, as a writer, has always displayed a deep concern for the marginalized classes and for the tribal population, and his writings have echoed his thoughts. His every major work is said to be preceded by extensive research and discussion with experts concerned. Kotta, which is the result of that research, discussion and first-hand experience, is the author's tribute to the Koraga tribe, with whom he has a deep and emotional attachment.

Kotta is a praiseworthy endeavour endeavour on the part of the author as he presents before the readers a convincing picture of social, cultural and economic life of the marginalised Dalit Koraga tribe living in the South Kannada district of Karnataka. It underlines their hardship, exploitation and shows how they cherish their identity. It will surely help us to know the tribe better which is one among several tribes of our country. Tribal development has been a focus area since independence. The Constitution of India provides for special protection

from exploitation and social injustice and promotion of educational and economic interests of the weaker sections, in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Through reservation of educational opportunities and political representation and jobs, it seeks to secure for them compensatory privileges and opportunities for development at a faster pace.

According to the 2011 census, tribal people constitute 8.6% of the nation's total population that means over 104 million people. But it is unfortunate that tribals all over India struggle to preserve their way of life. There are tribes who are struggling to survive as processes of development clash head-on with their world view and belief systems. There are others as well who find their livelihood threatened by the over-exploitation of forest resources. As tribal traditions get eroded, along with it disappears a rich heritage of indigenous knowledge ranging from herbal medicines to the art of forecasting natural disasters. Tribals prefer to live in harmony with nature. Their music, dance, song, art and culture fascinate viewers. We must find out ways to give them the benefits of modern civilisation while at the same time helping them retain their ancient identity and culture. There have been efforts by the government to develop their society through the implementation of several schemes and programmes. In spite of this, they continue to suffer from basic problems like poverty, illiteracy, inadequate health-care facilities and of course exploitation to which their lack of knowledge and awareness render them vulnerable. These have to be addressed on a priority basis to bring them into mainstream. Tribals face different problems. The primitive tribal groups who are in the habit of food gathering and engaged in hunting have to cope with problems which are different from those affecting tribals who practice the slash-and-burn type of shifting cultivation and those who are settled agriculturists. So, different sets of plans are needed to find solutions to the varied problems confronting them.

It is seen that the tribal areas in particular have become the focus of activities as they are richly endowed with the bulk of the country's natural resources like forests, minerals, land and water. The

pressure on these resources in tribal areas is growing at a faster pace endangering their livelihood-support systems. There is no denying the fact that the country views industrialisation as a means of achieving higher economic growth and faster development. But, at the same time, we have to protect the interests of our tribal sisters and brothers whose life is interwoven with the nature and the environment and who depend on nature for sustenance and livelihood. They need to be stakeholders in the process of economic growth and development.

Coming back to literature, I can say that literature has a major social responsibility. It can have an inspirational influence when it explores issues which are of great importance. It makes us conscious and aware of the plight of tribal people. Our aim is to build a strong nation and an enlightened society where all the people may enjoy their rights and live peacefully. Writers can eradicate social evils and address social problems by creating awareness amongst the people through their writings. Languages may vary but the process of creativity is one and universal. Human creativity is born out of anguish as it happened with Dr. Moily. At different points of time in the history of our country, there have been poets, writers, philosophers and religious leaders, who have spoken of the complexity of life, and propounded that the essence of a worthy life is one where the welfare humanity is the guiding force. I am sure, Dr. Moily will be a source of inspiration to our young writers and poets who will build a just society with the richness of their ideas and the intensity of human emotions.

With these words, I once again express my happiness on being part of this occasion and wish Dr. Moily all success in his future endeavours in the literary field and public life.

Jai Hind.

Release of the Book :
Áhunikbad and Uttar Adhunikabad

It is indeed a pleasure for me to be present this evening amidst this elite gathering comprising of eminent personalities from Odia language and literature when this book on 'Modernism and Post Modernism – a comparative study' has been released by Shri Ramakant Rath, the celebrated Odia poet.

Though the book is written in Odia, I learn that many new facts and information have been brought to light for readers and researchers to have a thorough understanding of the growth of literature in different periods.

This book is making a comprehensive attempt at highlighting Odia literature in the period of modernism and post modernism, I mean in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and in the late 20th and early 21st centuries respectively. Modernism, in fact encompasses the activities and output of those who felt the "traditional" forms of art, architecture, literature, religious faith, social organization and daily life were becoming outdated in the new economic, social, and political conditions of an emerging fully industrialized world and in its broadest definition, it is modern thought, or practice. Postmodernism, a movement away from the viewpoint of modernism has influenced many cultural fields, including literary criticism, sociology, linguistics, architecture, visual arts, and music.

New trends in literature are often a reaction to previous styles. Modernism and Post-Modernism literature are such two new trends having developed from different social and cultural settings and have their own distinct character and outlook. They represent a break from 19th century realism. We know how much our litterateurs are influenced by their surroundings and find subject for their creation. Writers are known the way they have been influenced by the conditions prevailing at that period of time and now a new generation of writers has arrived who heralds a new chapter of postmodernism or

possibly post-postmodernism. So the process of change is going on and change is one that one cannot stop, it is inevitable. Our writers and poets have to use their pen to create creations that reflect life's triumphs and tribulations in changing time to have lasting impression on the community and set society on right path. This book will pave way for wider discussion and sharing of knowledge to arrive at new findings.

Odia language has the distinction of being recommended as one of the classical languages in India. With its credentials of a long surviving rich cultural heritage and after meeting of prescribed parameters followed by clearing of all formalities, it is all set to be declared as a classical language in India after Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu and Kannada. It is a great honour for Odia literature delighting Odias.

The 15th century poet Adikabi Sarala Das, known as Adikabi or the Father of Odia literature, composed the 'Mahabharat' in Odia and it is firmly believed that Odia literature began to take shape with the composition of this great epic. It was a pioneering work in Odia literature and culture.

Odia language has a rich literary tradition. Various forms of literature abound in the Odia language. Many great writers and poets have pioneered and enriched Odia literature in their own inimitable way and brought acclaim for Odia literature. Popular literary works of our litterateurs have won several prestigious literary awards of the country like the Jnanpith Award, Saraswati Award, Moortidevi Award, Sahitya Academy Award in recognition to their vast talent and creativity. These creations are considered landmark for their clear message of social reform and social emancipation. Depiction of life's triumphs and tribulations in pure, lucid, vivacious and clear style has been the hallmark of Odia literature. Despite the vast passage of time, the language has been successful in maintaining its basic character, and at the same time, evolving as a modern language.

There is a need to have concrete plans for creating awareness about Odia language and literature among today's youth. Steps must be taken to encourage more research and at the same time to consolidate

all research works on history of Odia literature undertaken so far and to identify and encourage new research projects.

Languages are not merely a means of communication. Our languages and literature are our heritage. They define and reflect the roots of our society. It is also the mirror of society. The promotion of literature cannot take place on the basis of Government support alone. I urge all stakeholders from poets, writers, intellectuals and readers to contribute meaningfully towards preserving, encouraging and promoting Odia language and literature. We have no dearth of creativity and talent in Indian languages and so also in Odia literature. We need to create platforms to provide greater exposure to our litterateurs so that the creativity embedded in Odia literature is spread across the world.

It is important that the antiquity of Odia language and civilization must be further explored. When Odia is on the verge of being declared a classical language, it is our responsibility to make every effort for its healthy growth and development so that posterity can benefit from the vast knowledge and ideas that rest within Odia language. Our writers or poets should relentlessly strive to make Odia literature more comprehensible to the masses and draw more admirers to the language and in the process give a new dimension and vision to the Odia language and literature.

Critical appreciation of the current trends in literature is certainly welcome and I am happy to see that Shri Rath has brought before readers many remarkable information in his book. The study he made may be helpful for those who would like to delve more into this particular subject and they might even come up with more fascinating facts for readers. With these words, I once again congratulate the august gathering and wish that such perceptive literary endeavours are taken up by leading intellectuals in days ahead.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of OCTAVE :
A Festival of Art and Culture of North-East States

It is indeed a matter of great pleasure to be here for the inauguration of this festival of art and culture of the North-Eastern States – "OCTAVE". The reason is obvious. I belong to North East, fondly called the land of Seven Sisters. The region has fascinating beauty and to add that the ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity of the region is awesome. The rich tapestry of cultures of North-east whether it is highly developed classical dance forms and visual arts of the vibrant and rhythmic folk dances and songs of the hills people of the entire region or crafts of artisans implying rich creative expressions has been marvellous with its unique identity. However, owing to its isolation in the recent past, the region's culture has not received its due recognition that it truly deserves. This festival is significant not only because it showcases the vibrant culture of a very beautiful part of our country, but also because it brings out the beauty of our unity in diversity.

The laudable step taken by the Department of Culture, Government of Odisha and Eastern Zone Cultural Centre (EZCC), Kolkata has, therefore, a special significance for all of us. I understand that this festival 'OCTAVE" is being organised in other parts of the country. I have no doubt that this Octavian note symbolizes a deep emotional harmony. I hope that in days ahead, this festival will become an important and prestigious cultural event in country's calendar.

The main motive behind organising the 'OCTAVE' festival is to promote the art and culture of the North East with the main priority being, bringing tribal culture into the mainstream and thus creating awareness about their rich cultural heritage. All the Seven Sisters of North East have their own distinct cultures, different traditions, fairs, festivals and numerous colourful celebrations, which reflect their lifestyles. To showcase their rich cultural heritage is another objective of the festival. I understand that altogether 200 folk and tribal artistes

will be performing music and dance and painters and craftsmen will display their paintings and various craft items in the Craft Fair. I am sure that people will get to know more of the people of North East and their culture on a broader canvas. Finding myself amid artists and artisans of the region I feel completely overwhelmed.

Art forms and craft traditions have taken long years to evolve. Similarly, dance and music symbolizing joys and jubilations of generations hold the imprints of their long social and cultural history and tradition. Artistes and artisans of every generation have interpreted them and further enriched the tradition. Without them and their dedication, probably we would have been at a loss finding us disconnected with our past and strong roots. Keeping them alive is therefore a magnificent form of paying homage to our artistes and artisans and to our heritage. There is no other better way to safeguard them, than providing opportunities for performance and ensuring favourable conditions for the artistes and craftsmen who keep these traditions alive. In that way this festival is a justified step.

Our efforts should be to create a favourable environment for the cultural traditions and practices to flourish. In our march towards progress and prosperity, our cultural riches are our assets that make us proud, beautiful and connected. We must ensure the survival of our handicrafts, our traditional art, our dance forms and our music. We should encourage our youth to keep these skills and creativity alive and robust. I urge for collective commitment for preserving core cultural values and I shall be very happy when this commitment and effort will make a thousand orchids bloom in the valleys of the fascinating Seven Sister states.

With these words, I hope that people here will experience the vibrancy of the North East in their art, culture and craft and wish the festival OCTAVE all success.

Jai Hind.

Release of the Book : Gotie Jiban Jatesta Nuhen

Let me at the outset congratulate the two eminent persons on dais : Mr. Kuldip Nayar, the author of the celebrated book "BEYOND THE LINES" for its Odia incarnation, "GOTIE JIBAN JATHESTA NUHEN" and also the translators Dr. Gourahari Das and Mr. Mahendra Prasad for the fine Odia rendering of the book. I have met these two authors in different literary functions. Then let me congratulate Dr. Hara Prasad Das, who has just received the prestigious MURTI DEVI Award from the Hon'ble Vice-President of India. In fact, Odia literature is proud to have some of the most famous writers in fiction and poetry who are well known names in national and international arena. After my joining here as the Governor of Odisha, I have already attended a number of literary functions and interacted with many of them.

Mr. Kuldip Nayar has been a good friend of mine for a number of years and let me have a candid admission here that most in the political class are in awe of him. In fact, many great leaders of the freedom movement were great journalists themselves; even those who were not journalists in the true sense of the word, their writings reflected a sort of journalistic approach. Beginning right from Lala Lajpat Ray to Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and many others were not only formidable journalists but also were great statesmen. When the country became independent, roles were reversed. Our journalists contributed immensely to the growth of the nation. If today the nation has a good reputation of being a vibrant and mature democracy, then the contribution of journalists will always have to be appreciated.

As the last quarter of the twentieth century witnessed unprecedented degeneration of values, ethics and morals, people in general reposed great faith in journalists. This was a world-wide phenomenon and India was no exception. Then rapid socio-economic-

political changes combined with private electronic media ushered in a new era in journalism. The common man, needless to say, benefited immensely; yet there are many examples when mindless reporting, biased presentation and parochial way of interpreting events had led to unwanted social disturbances and destroyed big reputations. Then there is this dangerous tendency, mostly by young and aspiring journalists, of generalizing notions which have led to brewing of intolerance, hatred, violence and feeding readers with the opposite of what exist at the ground level. In fact, the damage caused is always irreparable. As a senior leader belonging to one of the most sensitive parts of the country – the North East – and as a person who occupied key positions in the Union Cabinet and being a Chief Minister of Nagaland for many years, I have first-hand experience of what sustained propaganda – be it negative or positive – can do to a people or region or a society. The point I am trying to make is simple : journalism is a profession that requires impeccable integrity, infinite patience, dogged adherence to truth, impartiality and accountability and all these will be possible if the young and aspiring journalists learn the finer aspects of self restraint and self regulation. This is where journalists like Mr. Kuldip Nayar and many other friends of mine act as illustrious path finders. Then there is the issue of growing intolerance on part of the political class, many of whom hold journalists, who report contrary to what they expect, as their die-hard enemies. In a democracy, more so when the democracy is the largest and the most vibrant one in the world – India, there is absolutely no place for intolerance and personal vendetta. Many in this country know how Pandit Nehru – then the Prime Minister of India – once commented that "Shankar's Weakly" – a purely cartoon magazine should not have left him unreported for some issues!

Coming back to Mr. Nayar, let me tell my elite audience here that generations of Indians know him as a fearless journalist and a relentless crusader. However, I would like to tell my audience that he possesses a photogenic memory that has helped him a lot. Journalists like him need no computers, they themselves are more than computers,

in the sense that journalists like Mr. Nayar attach compassion, care, love, concern and humane touch to events they store in memory, the computer does not have the ability to do this. I would urge the young professionals – both in print and electronic media – not to become dry like computers. Civilization in general and this nation in particular need journalists with compassion, love and concern, journalists who strive to integrate, not divide; who join hearts not break them, words of whose pen sow the seeds of love, not hatred. I am happy that today I share the dais with two such journalists: Mr. Kuldip Nayar and Dr. Gourahari Das. This book records interesting chapters and many sad as well as pleasant periods of time, chapters such as partition of the country, the Nehru Era, training in English journalism, chapters on two Home Ministers – late G.B. Pant and late Lal Bahadur Shastri, Smt. Indira Gandhi's Prime Minister-ship, the Bangladesh war etc. will captivate the readers. Readers, journalists, researchers and others will immensely benefit from this book. The Odia translation, I am sure, will be as popular as the English one.

While Mr. Nayar has already become a living legend, Dr. Das who has been a frontline journalist for three decades is also a Central Sahitya Akademy Award winning writer whose writings have already been translated into many languages. In the hand of Dr. Das, literature and journalism have been instruments of change and restructuring of socio-cultural and moral walls that have been gradually crumbling around us. I am told that his regular column "Jibanara Jala-chhabi" has been a unique way of amalgamating the finer aspects of both journalism and literature. I am sure; Dr. Das would have done a wonderful job in rendering Mr. Nayar's book in Odia. The co-translator Mr. Mahendra Prasad, I think, is not here, but I had already attended a function where his translation of Mr. Veerappa Moily's book was released. On this occasion, I extend my best wishes both to Dr. Gourahari Das and Mr. Mahendra Prasad and wish both of them a bright future in the world of literature.

In the end, I would just like to float an idea. This idea I have been nurturing for sometime now, after I saw the high quality of

publications here and after I became associated with a number of literary functions where I could meet eminent writers and renowned translators. More and more literature from the North-East should be translated into other Indian languages as well as into Odia, so that over a period of time, many misconceptions about people in the North-East, especially in Nagaland, Arunachal and Mizoram would change. Perceptions and conceptions should change and only compassionate writers can achieve this. Even writer – exchange programmes can be organized. I leave this idea to Dr. Gourahari Das and publisher Banoj Tripathy, both of whom are now holding important positions in Central Sahitya Akademy. I assure them of my cooperation in whatever small way is possible on my part.

Again, I extend my best wishes to Mr. Kuldip Nayar and others present here. I wish all success to Mr. Nayar in his future creative pursuits.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of Utkal Literature Festival – 2014

It is a pleasure to inaugurate the first edition of Utkal Literature Festival today and address this august gathering of litterateurs, artists and lovers of art and literature. I congratulate the Utkal Literature Festival Trust and its co-partners for their maiden venture to organize a festival to celebrate literature and arts particularly the performing arts.

Odisha earlier known as Utkal, the land where art achieves excellence has both literary and artistic heritage built over several centuries. Rich treasure of literary works and an equally rich and fascinating artistic tradition give Odisha a distinct identity. Odia language and literature and Odissi dance enjoy the prestigious classical status in the country. This festival being organized here to celebrate literature and arts is appropriate and always a welcome one.

Literature and Art is the signature of civilization. What we know to be true, throughout history, is that literature and arts -- all of them, are beliefs and values in all societies that draw from each of us - the art from within. They define and celebrate all aspects of our lives. They speak the language of heart. They are the universal language that communicates to all people. That is why literature and arts continue -- they are values and beliefs. Values and beliefs are the very essence of who we are.

Literature and Arts have always played a crucial role in society. They communicate and speak to us in many ways that enhance our lives. They not only bring us joy in every aspect of our lives but also give us the creativity to express ourselves, while challenging the intellect. As literature and art inspire creativity in each of us individually, they breathe life into our communities. It has been well said that literature and art, two mediums of creativity are the glue that hold a community together. I see little of more importance to the future of our country and of civilization than full recognition of the place of the litterateur and artist. On this earth of ours where everything is

subject to the passing of time, one thing only is both subject to time and yet victorious over it : the work of literature and art. If literature and art is to nourish the roots of our culture, litterateurs and artists should be at the forefront with their creations. Society needs creative people to keep moving.

The advancements in Science and Technology can make our living better and comfortable, but literature and art can only give us eternal happiness and make our lives sublime and meaningful. We must continue to find a place for literature and arts, two vibrant means of communication in our individual and community life. So, it is imperative that in order to foster love, harmony and peace in the society and to experiencing life as a whole, festivals in literature, art and culture should be held frequently and should keep engaging people in a positive manner. World has now become a global village and everyone has access to everything with ease. Thanks to the advancements in technology. We must seize the advantage of technology and take our literature and art outside to reach wider audience.

I understand that the organizers of this Literature Festival have arranged a series of sessions are devoted on various themes of art and literature and to help one know and understand various forms of creative expressions in literature and art. I find one such session is devoted on 'Translation and Retranslation'. This is an important aspect of literature to bring literature to the masses. I am sure the festival will be highly useful to Odia literature to make the canvas of Odia writing more expansive and cosmopolitan and it fully realizes the rich potential of a classical Indian language. On the other hand through qualitative translation of works of other Indian and even foreign languages in Odia readers can have the opportunity to understand and appreciate the richness of other literature. Besides in-house discussions, I find there will be an open air 'Literature under the Tree' programme and an 'Artist at Wok' session among others. The effort is indeed laudable.

I hope that all these sessions will provide the lovers of art and literature much to celebrate the contributions of the diversity of literature and the arts that is enriching our lives and our society, in ways that are unprecedented. Those participating in this festival should be rightfully proud of their contributions to this enrichment and I am sure that they would continue to awaken the spirit of freedom and of beauty, which is creative, which is luminous with the realities of life; which moves and leads to action.

With these words, I wish all success to this festival in its endeavours towards preserving and promoting the rich tradition of Odisha as reflected through literature and art and their facilitation and promotion beyond the boundaries of Odisha and establishing itself in various parts of India and abroad.

Jai Hind.

Shradha Ceremony of Bagha Jatin

At the outset let me take the opportunity to congratulate the Bagha Jatin Development Committee for organising this momentous function in order to celebrate the life of an illustrious revolutionary. I am delighted to visit this place where our revered and valiant hero Jatindra Nath Mukherjee who is better known as Bagha Jatin for his heroic killing of a dreaded tiger had breathed his last. I take this opportunity to pay my tribute to this immortal revolutionary.

I am given to understand that Bagha Jatin Development Committee observes the year long death centenary of Bagha Jatin and it ends on 10th September 2015. The remembrance of the glorious saga of our freedom struggle's different strains ensures that the valiant sacrifice of the heroes like Bagha Jatin is never lost to oblivion. In death as in life, the great patriot Bagha Jatin's commitment to the cause of freedom of motherland was unwavering and extraordinary.

Any sacrifice will be inadequate to accomplish the greatest aim of freeing the motherland', was the inspiring outlook of revolutionaries who believed in armed struggle for freedom. The revolutionaries like Bagha Jatin and his associates, Chittapriya Ray Choudhury, Narendra Nath Dasgupta, Manoranjan Sengupta were the worthy sons of Mother India who sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose who was born in Odisha is always held in the highest esteem in the country for sacrificing his life for the freedom movement of India. Known for his formidable leadership, dauntless courage and unwavering faith, Netaji remains a role model for our numerous countrymen. His legacy of astute diplomacy in the face of extreme adversity is almost unsurpassed and he continues to inspire the vast multitude of our people.

This is also the solemn occasion to remember the most prominent of our freedom fighters, the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhiji, but for whose extraordinary exploits we would not have been able to attain independence in 1947 within a historically brief time-span since his emergence on the Indian political scene. In fact he was

the nation's greatest revolutionary who moved millions while bringing them into the freedom struggle on a scale unsurpassed before and in the subsequent period.

We proudly remember our indomitable freedom fighters, who made supreme sacrifices and shed their precious blood so that the fellow sisters and brothers live a better life free from the humiliation of imperialist domination and colonial exploitation. The debt of gratitude that all of us owe to them cannot be repaid.

Love of the motherland must fill our heart so that all else appear as of little consequence. I urge upon the youth to have a fervent patriotism which rejoices at every opportunity of sacrifice for the motherland, a dauntless heart which refuses to be turned back from its object by difficulty or danger. Equipped with all these, they must start on their mission and reverently seek the joy which comes of expending oneself in the service of the country.

Bagha Jatin's heroics touched the soul of every patriotic Indian and inspired many to plunge into the national movement. He had the foresight and understanding that freedom for any was not possible without freedom for all.

He realized that even amongst all the oppressed, the heroic heart would lead and drive the revolution. His was a relentless and arduous struggle for freedom and he taught us that the fight against all forms of discrimination is the most noble cause we can pursue. The example of Bagha Jatin's life leaves the present generation with the challenge to translate his unfulfilled dream into reality.

Modern day India which is characterised by competing interests, can extract many lessons as the dimensions of our lives need not be mutually exclusive and incompatible.

Ladies and gentlemen, history remembers Bagha Jatin as a great revolutionary, a proud Indian and an exemplary freedom fighter. He was a hero who unified all for the fight for national liberation. This occasion is for reflecting on various aspects of the dimensions, acts of resistance and ideology of Bagha Jatin. In my view, it would be

important for us to draw inspiration from Bagha Jatin's indomitable courage and leadership.

The selfless ardour for freedom as manifested in Bagha Jatin is one of those which will serve as an eternal beacon for nation-building and our continuing struggle against all forms of discrimination. It is our duty to educate the younger generation about the life and contribution of the likes of Bagha Jatin, and reveal the foresight of these heroes in shaping our destiny and confronting the issues like poverty and social inequality that we still face. Let us strive hard and work towards the kind of country Bagha Jatin envisaged. That indeed will be the best tribute to the abiding memory of our freedom fighters whom we remember with boundless gratitude.

With these words, I once again pay my tribute to this noble soul and wish the endeavours of Bagha Jatin Development Committee to perpetuate his memory all success.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of Rajdhani Book Fair

While conveying my best wishes to one and all present here for the coming Christmas and the New Year, I convey my appreciation to the organizers of such a mammoth book fair, which over the years has become immensely popular with the book lovers of the capital in particular and the people of the state in general. Let me admit here that though I have attended a number of literary functions in the state, this is the first time I am attending a Book Fair in Odisha. And let me admit, it is a great feeling.

Books have always fascinated me and this fascinating intimacy with books began long ago; in fact so many years ago that many in the audience might not have been even born! This is no exaggeration. Let me narrate in brief how I fell in love with the books. We have to walk down the memory lane back to the early 1950s when I – a very poor boy from the Mokokchung district of the present day Nagaland – had arrived in Calcutta to pursue higher education in the historic Scottish Church College. I had come to became a doctor, but could not become one due to severe financial constraints. However, I settled down in that institution and for the first time, could realize the enormous possibilities and opportunity that life had to offer there. Yet one truth had never escaped my understanding and it was that books – only books could shape a human being's destiny. Without books neither human beings nor civilization and society as a whole can move forward! Those days only books and two/three newspapers were our staple food. Teachers in the College goaded, encouraged, guided and inspired us to read, read and read!

It was from the Scottish Church College that I passed my Intermediate and moved to Allahabad University, which at that time was a hugely reputed centre of learning throughout India. I had to

spend around six hours a day in the library in two shifts! It was here that I came in contact with thousands of books. And with practically no work there, I read and read and read. I always say my days in Allahabad were golden days because here I got the opportunity to read thousands of books and this made me humble and shaped my whole being; and prepared me for myriad challenges of life both at political as well as personal level. Let me admit here before this august gathering that since that day till today, that is, during a period of more than six decades I have had the opportunity to serve my state and country in different capacities: from being a Union Minister in the late sixties to being the Chief Minister of Nagaland four times and now, in the last more than a decade, I have been the Governor of Goa, Maharashtra and Odisha. But why do I tell all these here in a Book Fair inauguration function? The reason is simple. For six decades, I have been a librarian all through my life – buying new books, keeping them carefully in libraries in a decorative and disciplined manner and read them whenever I have time. Frankly; I find it difficult to go to sleep unless I have read something in the day. The Raj Bhavan where I have stayed had libraries, but I have turned them into attractive ones. Here, in Odisha Raj Bhavan, we had a good library – I mean we had many valuable books. The place looked liked a makeshift library, but the first thing I did here after my arrival was to renovate the library. We constructed a brand new two storied spacious library adjacent to the main structure with new look furniture etc. It is now a sweet little haven for book lovers! The bottom-line literature here is whatever position one might have been, he or she must not be away from books. Every day is a new day, every week is a new week and every month is a new month. And every week or at least every month, we should begin reading a new book, And frankly, the benefits are so many that I refrain from analyzing them here! Yet, trust me and my experience that

books save you from stress and blood pressure, prepare you for facing new challenges of life, broaden your horizon of understanding the mysteries of life as well as relationships and elevates you to a level where mundane worldly things do not matter much.

Here, let me quote what Winston Churchill had said long ago and I quote, "If you cannot read all your books, at any rate handle or fondle them – peer into them, let them fall open where they will, read from the first sentence that arrests the eye, set them back on the shelves with your own hands, arrange them on your own plan so that if you do not know what is in them, you at least know where they are. If they cannot enter the circle of your life, do not deny them at least a nod of recognition". This indeed sums up what should be our attitude towards books.

In my college and university days, book fairs were unheard of concepts. In Calcutta, all sorts of books were available those days. In book stores to second-hand book shops and on footpaths where one could buy books at one-third or one-fourth of the original price! And on the footpaths of Calcutta one would often see some of the real famous people bending over the book piles and choosing one or two rare books! Such traditions did not exist in Allahabad, yet it was and it still is, a city of book lovers. I am not aware of the present, but those days the city had some lovely book stores.

However, book fairs completely changed the scenario. Book lovers, students, researchers and readers – for that matter people with taste for specific books – benefited immensely from book fairs. Latest books as well as rarest of rare books and books on almost all subjects were available at a single place over a period of one or two or three weeks! Readers could buy books for the whole year from such book fairs. And as times evolved, book fairs became a meeting place of writers, publishers, readers etc. Every day, one or two unique

programmes were major attraction for visitors. Educational institutions could get whatever they wanted for their libraries! With the emergence of e-marketing, book lovers now get whatever book they want by clicking on a button. In fact. such aggressive marketing strategies have forced some of the finest old-fashioned book stores to call it a day and pull the shutters down! But book fares such as these have been able to revive interest in direct interaction between the book sellers and the book lovers! Moreover, book fairs, different literary festivals, book release functions are indicators that readers in general and book lovers in particular love the feel and smell of books – if you understand what I mean !!

I am given to know that Odisha is home to a number of book fairs. Apart from the big cities like Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur and Rourkela, almost all district headquarters now organize book fairs! Even book fairs are also organized at sub-division levels. This strengthens my belief that the people of Odisha are intellectually inclined. Not only the people are intellectually inclined, writers from this state have been routinely in the forefront when it comes to literary recognition at national level. Another thing which was fascinated me here is the quality of publication. Whatever best is possible in India is done here. This is proof enough of the quality consciousness of Odia writers and publishers!

Book fairs, we all know have now been firmly rooted in Odisha. But have we been negligent of our libraries? Or have we, consciously or unconsciously, overlooked the overall health of our libraries, especially in semi-urban and rural areas! To me, unless we strengthen our libraries, our reading habits will automatically wane. Once the library network is strengthened and the management of these libraries is handed over to a group of local people as recommended by the Panchayat or Panchayat Samiti or the Zilla Parishad under the

direct supervision of some government functionary, things will surely improve. A student or an enthusiastic reader in rural or tribal areas should get some good books or journals or newspapers in the local library – may be a small one! American astrophysicist and writer Carl Sagan once observed, "The health of our civilization can be tested by how well we support over libraries". Wise words indeed.

So much so about library and book fairs. Now let us see what the great English Philosopher Sir Francis Bacon had said, "Reading maketh a full man and writing an exact man. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested. That is, some books are to be read, but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly and with diligence and attention".

I think that sums up the whole concept of reading in a very convincing way. I once again commend the efforts of the members of the Book fair Committee. Also, I hope this book fair movement in Odisha will strengthen itself with the active participation of all stakeholders.

Jai Hind.

Golden Jubilee Celebration of Kerala Kala Samiti

I am delighted to be with you this evening for the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Kerala Kala Samiti. I congratulate the member families on achievement of this remarkable milestone by the Kerala Kala Samiti.

It is heartening that the Kerala Kala Samiti, Bhubaneswar established since 1966 has been the voice of the Malayalis staying in the capital city. Over these years, the cultural organization of people from the State of Kerala has been playing a vital role in bringing together, the Malayali community in Bhubaneswar through cultural and community activities and is continuing its glorious journey. The organization has been promoting the rich cultural heritage of their home State and contributing to the cultural integration amongst the people of Odisha and Kerala. It is also actively involved in social development in Odisha in a number of ways including health, education and culture. Instituting awards for bright meritorious students and young talents in sports and games is indeed a laudable endeavour on the part of Kerala Kala Samiti.

I am told that the journey of Malayalis from Kerala to Odisha, started way back in 1955 when the construction work started for the famous Hirakud Dam. It is the warmth and hospitality of the people of Odisha that encouraged more and more Malayalis to look for a life in Odisha. I am given to understand that today Kerala Kala Samiti has a membership of over 500 Malayali families residing in Bhubaneswar and there are over 1000 families spread across the State. Keralites are attributed as the pioneer in the State of Odisha in a number of areas like bringing Kathakali, Mohini Attam dance styles, confectionery and Tea and Coffee cultivation. A good thing about a Malayali is that they accommodate themselves easily in every culture and climate. Wherever they live no matter they still have a special love and passion towards their home land and celebrate their traditional festivals be it

Onam or Christmas or Janmastami with pomp and enthusiasm cutting across faith and status.

I am told that there are over 30,000 Odia community people residing in Kerala and actively involved in contributing to the growth of that State. Thousands of people from Odisha visit Kerala to know more of 'God's own Country'. This cultural exchange programme helps people of both States to know better the rich cultural heritage of each other, develop mutual love and respect and share peace in the community.

The key to healthy relations between States lies in amity between the people, and the key to amity between people lies in heart-to-heart exchange. People-to-people exchange is a bridge of understanding and trust between States and between people. Cultural exchange programmes are playing a crucial role in encouraging a relationship between people of two States.

Odisha and Kerala are two beautiful States of a beautiful country. Kerala, affectionately called as 'Gods Own Country' is famous for many things be it Hill Stations, Houseboats, Kerala Monsoon, Kerala Ayurveda or Kerala Boat race and the State offers ample opportunities to visitors to explore and experience. Odisha, known as the 'Incredible Soul of India' is a State with a rich cultural heritage and its ancient temples, flora and fauna leave a distinct imprint in the minds of the visitors. Both the States have classical dance form in Odissi, Kathakali and Mohini Attam. The Malayali people are simple with warmth and generosity in heart for others and those visiting their State.

We are now living in an age of technology. The relation of the new technology to culture is especially vivid and pressing in a country like ours. India is the one which has most successfully preserved multiple languages and cultures, plural literatures and traditions and extra-ordinary cultural diversity. The official recognition of twenty-two languages is the manifestation of a far deeper heterogeneity and co-existence of multiple cultures, each with ancient literatures, valued traditions and historic arts and monuments. The question arises

whether these rich multiple cultures of India can survive the Information Age. Being an optimist, I always see the brighter sides and I am sure our rich multiple cultures will not only continue to survive but also contribute toward strengthening our unity in diversity.

But this is not a world in which people are necessarily mono-cultural or mono-lingual. It is possible to be positively rooted in one's culture and yet to collaborate with, to understand, to participate in, other cultures as well. India is again the world's best example of the possibility of multi-lingualism, which is a proxy for multi-culturalism. In no other country do people live so easily as in the major Indian cities with multiple linguistic and cultural groups and Bhuoaneswar is a very good example of this. In no other country can people shift so easily from one to another cultural frame. In this respect, India can provide a model for what the rest of the world could be like.

From God's own country to the Land of temples — the journey of the Malayali here has been a long one. The bountiful coconut and palm trees, the long stretch of coastline and the lush green mountains of Odisha seem to have be. utifully compensated the two thousand kilometre distance and linguistic barrier. Let this journey be more glorious in the coming years. I wish and hope that there will be more cooperation and participation in key sectors thereby setting a fine example of cordial relation and harmony.

With these words, I wish all the member families all the very best and the Kerala Kala Samiti continued success in their endeavour towards strengthening social and cultural bond amongst the people of Odisha and Kerala and contributing to the growth of their second homes.

Jai Hind.

Release of VACHANA Volume of Odia Language

I am delighted to be here for the release of the translated version of selected 'Vachanas' from 12th century Vachana literature into Odia language on the occasion of Golden Jubilee celebrations of Basava Samithi, Bengaluru. I am given to understand that the Samithi brings out the translation in Odia and 12 other Indian languages in the second phase of the multi-lingual Vachana Translation Project launched by the Government of Karnataka. I would like to commend the wonderful work done by Basava Samithi in bringing out translated version of Vachana literature in all the 23 scheduled languages of the country under the project. I am told that the Samithi will publish the translation into four foreign languages- French, Spanish, Chinese and German - in the third phase shortly. As Basava Samithi adds another feather to its cap, I pay my homage to the founder of Basava Samithi, late B.D. Jatti who was the former Governor of Odisha and former Vice-President of India. Hailed as a man who set an example of selfless service, he always embodied value-based politics. He was a simple man and an extraordinary person at the same time and he rightly titled his autobiography, I'm My Own Model.

Mr. Arvind Jatti, President of Basava Samiti and son of late B.D. Jatti, deserves special appreciation for taking a leading role in propagating the philosophy, life and teachings of Sharanas, including the 12th century social reformer, Mahatma Basaveshwara and Vachana literature. As a worthy son and a deserving successor of his illustrious father, Mr. Arvindji has taken several steps to fulfil his father's wish and provided Basava Samithi with visionary leadership and able guidance.

Vachana literature of the 12th century is an asset to Indian literature. There is melody and music in our innermost being and this literature makes one responsive to the music of the soul, and awakens finer shades of feeling in the depth of the soul. This literature is undoubtedly one of the finest spiritual literatures ever written.

The quality, truthfulness and reliability has given this literature its unique identity. We in our lives always yearn for peace and happiness. Violence and conflict are one of the most serious problems facing the world today. If our minds are dominated by anger, we lose the best part of human intelligence - wisdom, the ability to decide between right and wrong. The role of spiritual literatures like 'Vachana' in providing wisdom and philosophical insight for readers is invaluable. Vachana literature has a made a rich contribution to Kannada literature and has been recognised as a classical literature of the country.

Mahatma Basaveshwara belonged to an era which was precedes that of modern social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dayanand Saraswati and Mahatma Gandhi. He was bold and was far ahead of his time in terms of free thinking, social reforms, advocacy for women's emancipation and championing a casteless society and equality and the cause of the poor and the downtrodden. Arthur Miles observes in his book The Land of Lingam. "Whatever legend may say about Basava, the fact is pretty clear that he was the first Indian free thinker. He might be called the Luther of India." For the present day social reformers he remains a role model.

This great Indian free thinker and his associate Sharanas started and enriched a literary form that had a universality of appeal, the Vachana or Brief Prose — lyric poetry. Vachana literature, a basic scripture of the Lingayat religion, is committed to social upliftment and self-realization and is simple enough to be understood by the most ignorant and esoteric enough to be admired by the most sophisticated. It is truly a priceless gift to humankind.

I understand that translating Vachanas is quite a challenge. Here it involves translating from one classical language in to another I mean from Kannada to Odia. I take this opportunity to congratulate the translators who have rendered the narratives with precision and have taken care to retain the essence of original in the translations. The contribution of Shri Arvind Jatti and others who are associated with bringing such a valuable publication to Odia readers and enable

them to get the taste of the richness and uniqueness of Vachana literature is quite praiseworthy.

Literature is a mirror of the social and cultural relationships within a people, a society and a culture. When works of literature are translated from one language to the other, the recipients in the new language get an insight into the social and cultural conditions of the other society and its people. Since dialogue between cultures requires channels, literature is a highly important tool in that dialogue. If one wishes to get to know a great piece of literature of other language, two options are available: either one learns the language, or one reads the literature in translation. Of course, learning the language is subject to limitations, simply because there are so many languages that it is impossible to learn them all; so translation continues to be the most important channel of communication between cultures.

The great poet Goethe believed that a literature exhausts itself and its resources become depleted if it closes itself off to the influences and contributions of other literatures. Not only literature but language itself thrives as it makes connections with other languages. We may say that the broadening of horizons that results from translation activities does not affect only readers, speakers, and writers of a language, but the very nature of the language itself. The more a language embraces infusions and transfusions of new elements, the larger, more forceful, and more flexible it becomes as an expressive medium. Translation of a literary work reaches well beyond the literary scope of the source text.

In order to keep our own culture vibrant, it is essential that we expand the depth of literary options available. To truly be among the most enlightened, a culture must be open to and receive works from the great authors of the globe. As it stands, some of the best works ever written will remain unread by the vast majority of the world's population unless effective translations are made available.

The impact of literature may not be immediate or direct, but it is far more enduring: literature has long been an agent of momentous changes in human history. It has moved societies, sparked

revolutions, and lit the lamp of knowledge. In honouring authors and poets, we recognize not just achievements and accomplishments but we also celebrate the sensitivity, the richness, the creativity and the power of the human mind and the human spirit.

Translation expands our ability to explore through literature the thoughts and feelings of people from another society or another time. It permits us to savour the transformation of the foreign into the familiar and for a brief time to live outside our own skins, our own preconceptions and misconceptions. It expands and deepens our world, our consciousness, in countless, indescribable ways.

As the world shrinks and interest in multiculturalism grows, so too does the fascination with literature from around the globe. Unfortunately, the rate and level of literary translation has not kept pace with demand.

There is a need for a large number of literary translators and to train a new generation of literary translators who will help bring literature of other Indian languages and also of world literature in a variety of languages to our own languages for the benefit of the reading public. They must know that when they translate literature, they are transcreating literature, and the text of the translation must adhere to the highest standards of literary quality and retain the essence of the original. After all, translation and literature have long been interwined with each other.

Our good fortune is that we have a very rich tradition in literature and poetry going back to many centuries. It is a living tradition and it is incumbent upon us to protect and enrich it. No society can consider itself complete if it has insufficient room for creativity. To understand and enjoy life it is necessary to possess artistic sensitivity.

Our schools and colleges are understandably focused on providing children and young men and women with the means to go forward in life, to make the most of their abilities, to play their role in society and grow up as responsible citizens of a free country. Sometimes I believe we do not pay enough attention to the

humanities that, as the word implies, will help them grow up as better human beings. We should ensure that even as our youth learn skills and equip themselves for employment, they are not deprived of access to literature and poetry. Every access to the visual and performing arts and to other forms and expressions of human creativity must remain unaffected. This would make their education more wholesome.

With these words, I once again express my happiness to release the translated version of such a unique and wonderful literature. I am sure it will receive reader's acceptance and appreciation.

Jai Hind.

Launch of Coffee Table Book
Through the Prism of Time–Odisha and its Raj Bhavans

Today as the nation celebrates Gandhi Jayanti Raj Bhavan Odisha adds a new chapter in its glorious service to the state and the nation by bringing out a Coffee Table Book on Odisha and its Raj Bhavans as seen through the prism of time. Let me express my happiness for your presence in the book launch ceremony on the auspicious day of Gandhi Jayanti. I take this opportunity to pay my homage to Gandhiji and to all the venerable architects of modern Odisha.

I am happy to extend a warm welcome to the Hon'ble Chief Minister and express my hearty thanks for releasing the book. I am also happy that award winning poet Padma Vibhusan Dr. Sitakanta Mahapatra shared with us his valuable remarks on this occasion. It is my pleasure to welcome all of you to this book release function.

I congratulate the distinguished editorial board, the author and all who have contributed to the publication of this book in one way or the other for their dedicated efforts. The publisher of this book also deserves commendation for bringing out the book so beautifully in neat printing.

Odisha has come a long way on the path of progress and development ever since its formation in 1936. As the State completes 80 years of existence this year, it is time to look back at its chequered history and remarkable journey. I know that it is not an easy job to sum up the whole things in a pictorial manner but the author and editors have done a great job. With this work, we have tried to document the history, culture and tradition of Odisha from the earliest recorded history to the present time.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this book details a journey that is unique in many ways. This book narrates and illustrates the beauty that the State boasts of and the charm of our unique Raj Bhavans. When you read this book, you will gain deep insight into the dimensions of

our glorious history, foundations given by leaders to our economic and political life and social harmony – all of these topics are documented through a fluid narrative. This rich story is woven with rare and compelling photographs that record the ancient roots of Odisha's unique identity and celebrate the modern fruits of our governance.

From a fighting race to sea fearing merchants to competing in highest sporting arena the Olympics, it has been a long journey for the people of Odisha. In their inimitable way they have brought vitality to the society and show potential for more growth and success. Above all, the state's tryst with destiny endures because of its many dimensions, and provides a blueprint for future growth and prosperity in social, economic and political sphere in a globalized and competitive world.

The book also portrays the story of Raj Bhavans, initially at Puri, then at Cuttack, and at Bhubaneswar. All these buildings have a history behind them. Lalbagh Palace which was utilised as Raj Bhavan was associated with Moghul and Maratha rulers. While Puri is over 100 years old, the present one at Bhubaneswar is already over 50 years old. Raj Bhavan is a very important institution which actually enshrines the idea of responsible government and governance. As part of that sacred institution, the Office of the Governor is seen with utmost reverence in Indian democracy.

Raj Bhavan is one of our finest institutions. In Odisha, it stands tall with its majestic look and has a glorious tradition of dignified charm. The credit for this goes largely to a long line of illustrious Governors and to successive governments, which over a period of time, came to respect the sanctity for its constitutional competence, and so steered clear of controversies. I am proud to have the privilege to serve the State as Governor.

The past has seen formation of the State as the first one in the country formed on linguistic basis. The role of the Governor assumed utmost importance during the British Rule. It continues to evolve in safeguarding constitutional requirements during the last seven decades. This office has been occupied by my illustrious predecessors who have

left their imprints on the sands of time and provided able leadership in scripting Odisha's progress and prosperity.

Our challenges may be daunting. There have been times when people have encountered rough places on the highway of our history but together they have been successful and accomplished so much. The people of Odisha must be aware at all times that they have a glorious past and a rich cultural heritage. They must never lose sight of that. They have a history that is very much based upon men and women who believe in the public good – people like Madhu Babu, Gopabandhu Das, Biju Babu who strove tirelessly to make Odisha proud.

It is the past that motivates and inspires us to make present beautiful and the present builds the foundation for the future. Let us honour the past, work on the present and together build the future. I am so grateful for the privilege of serving the State and its people. I pledge to continue to work to make the State a beacon for others.

As Governor of Odisha, I wish to thank you and congratulate you for what you have achieved. May you long continue to achieve more. I wish you will find this book as a companion to travel to the past, analyse the present in its progress and aim for a bright and better future.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of Chidananda Decade-
A World Peace Initiative (2016-2026)

I am delighted to be amongst such distinguished gathering here this evening for the inauguration of ''Chidananda Decade (2016-2026) : A World Peace Initiative" dedicated to the memory of revered Swami Chidananda Saraswati on his birth centenary year. It is a befitting tribute to Swamiji who had committed all his life for promotion of peace and harmony and serving to alleviate suffering not only of human beings but also of birds and animals. He was among the first to reach the suffering people with all necessary helping hand and service team whenever and wherever natural calamity strikes. Let me at the outset pay my respect and homage to Swamiji. I am equally happy that this initiative is launched from Odisha which has a special place in the heart of Swamiji as revealed from his over 50 times visit to the state and it was also the centre of all his pioneering activities and projects.

Regarding Swamiji, though born in a wealthy family, he shunned the pleasures of the world to devote himself to seclusion and contemplation. While he was at college, text-books had to take second place to spiritual books. The works of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Sivananda took precedence over all others. All along a brilliant student, his career in Loyala College in Madras provided him ample opportunity to understand Lord Jesus and assimilate the essential teachings of Christianity. The glorious ideals of Lord Jesus, the Apostles and the other Christian saints had found in his heart a synthesis of all that is best and noble in the Hindu culture. To him, study of the Bible was no mere routine; it was the living word of God, just as living and real as the words of the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita. His innate breadth of vision enabled him to transcend all differences.

All his life he lived and served tirelessly. Delving into his life one will understand and realize that what Swami Chidanandaji

preached he also practiced in his life. His contribution to the health and education through Divine Life Society is exemplary and Odisha is proudly benefited from the outstanding legacy of Divine Life Society.

I am told that the socio-spiritual movement launched today will be a ten year long multi-dimensional project focussing on universal brotherhood, inter-faith dialogue and World Peace. I would like to thank the "Swami Chidananda Sevashram" for inviting me to address this august gathering of spiritual leaders from all over India and world and such a distinguished audience representing all walks of life of the society.

World Peace is the most important topic on earth. Therefore any initiative towards world peace is always welcome and is seen with high optimism and great hope. Prior to this initiative by Swami Chidananda Sevashram the world has witnessed several such peace initiatives from spiritual leaders to world leaders like Mahatma Gandhiji who is said to be apostle of peace and world organisations like United Nations and UNESCO are actively working to this end. Incidentally it was Odisha then Kalinga from where peace emissaries were sent to far off places by a transformed Emperor Asoka who renounced violence seeing bloodshed in the famous Kalinga War fought in 261 B.C. In spite of all these, incidents of breach of peace continue to occur and it remains a global concern. World peace is as crucial and necessary as before because it is fundamental to progress and development. Here a question comes to mind. What kind of peace do we seek? I am talking about genuine peace, the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth living, the kind that enables men and nations to grow and to hope and to build a better life for their children.

As a continuous fighter in the Naga peace movement I want to take this opportunity to share with you some of my thoughts – my dream for peace. This dream is nurtured by the impulses from the Biblical tradition, from experiences and events I came across.

There is so much suffering, so much hatred and so much misery crying out for our attention. Human rights are being violated. Violence and terrorism are not the answer. Something must be done

and soon. It is not how much we do, but how much sincerity we put in the action that we do is important. Our words must be judged by our deeds as espoused by Swami Chidanandaji and in striving for a lofty ideal we must use practical methods; and if we cannot attain all at one leap, we must advance towards it step by step, reasonably content so long as we do actually make some progress in the right direction. And that is why I would like to urge upon the distinguished audience never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. Let each one of you be a burning light in the world of peace.

When it comes to world peace, most people think pessimism is realistic, and optimism naïve. But most people are wrong. Our problems are manmade therefore, they can be solved by man. No problem of human destiny is beyond human beings. Man's reason and spirit have often solved the seemingly unsolvable and I believe we can do it again. Constitution of UNESCO aptly states and I quote, "That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".

We have different languages when we speak about peace. As we represent different forms of knowledge, power, experience and wisdom, we also participate in different discourses. Despite theological differences, all great religions share common commitments that define our ideal secular relationships. I am convinced that all irrespective of faith and belief can embrace each other in a common effort to alleviate human suffering and to espouse peace. Here I quote Martin Luther King Jr. who said, "the beauty of genuine brotherhood and peace is more precious than diamonds or silver or gold."

Let me acknowledge that peace without justice is hollow. It is the responsibility of all the levels of government–local, State, and National–to provide and protect that freedom for all of our citizens by all means within their authority.

Inner peace is the most valuable thing that we can cultivate. Nobody can give us inner peace, at the same time it is only our own thoughts that can rob us of our inner peace. The modern world with its

many fascinations, distractions and temptations can give us many things, but the humblest of all goals – our own inner peace – seems the one illusive thing beyond our reach. Yet, to attain inner peace it is not necessary to go back in time or visit the religious sites. Peace is perfectly compatible with modern life, if we learn how to harness the values of peace to the dynamism of modern life. It is where the timeless teachings of our spiritual gurus hold importance in showing the right path to peace and happiness.

We need leaders who share the vision of World Peace of Mahatma Gandhi, John F. Kennedy, Nelson Mandela and that of spiritual leaders like Swami Vivekananda, Swami Chidananda, Dalai Lama to just name a few.

Swami Chidananda is an epitome of humility and service, icon of compassion, Vedanta personified, the quintessential saint and sage. Until his last breath, filled with love, humility and compassion, he served as the servant of all living beings including creatures and plants. May we follow his footprints and draw inspiration to live a life of truthfulness, purity, kindness, compassion, humility, love for each other and service to mankind that will ultimately lead us to live in peace. Let us thank God for the opportunity that we all have together today, for this gift of peace that reminds us that we have been created to live that peace.

With these words, I once again express my happiness for inaugurating this World Peace Initiative and wish it achieves its mission. I also wish Chidananda Sevashram all success in its endeavours.

Jai Hind.

ECOLOGY AND TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

65th Human Rights Day Celebration Organized by ÁSHRA

I am happy to be here today with sisters and brothers of this part of Odisha who have gathered here in large numbers to celebrate the Human Rights Day that marks an important milestone towards realization of human rights for all citizens of the world. First of all, I thank God for whom we all are equal and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights echoes that by stating, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights," as I got opportunity to talk to you on this day that commemorates the 65th year of the adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights by United Nations. I congratulate 'ASHRA' (Adivasis For Social and Human Rights) which celebrates its 10th foundation day today. It is heartening to note that the organization, inspired by the spirit of freedom has been working dedicatedly at the grassroot level among the adivasis, dalits, poor and marginalized communities in the Scheduled district of Sundargarh for their holistic development and also for the protection and promotion of social and human rights of every individual irrespective of caste, creed and sex. I wish 'ASHRA' will continue to work with renewed vigour and commitment in days ahead to put its vision of a just and equitable society into reality where human rights are valued and the dignity of every individual is upheld.

By celebrating the day we join the people around the globe with our solidarity and support for the fundamental principles of human rights. It is true, over the years there has been fundamental progress in the protection and promotion of the rights of marginalized groups, in the advancement of rights of women and differently abled persons and a much greater understanding of the universality and indivisibility of human rights. The movement for human rights has gained ground with citizens becoming conscious of their rights and demanding an end to all kinds of exploitation. There are hundreds of human rights activists and social workers who are not only advocating

for human rights, but who are continuously working to achieve their goals of education, peace and equality.

But on the other hand, it is unfortunate that there is no end to violation of human rights in different forms at different places. Violations against any group—whether a religious minority, women, adivasis, dalits, or weaker sections —remind us of the indivisibility of human rights and of the work left to be done to make human rights a reality. I would say that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which is a milestone in the long struggle for human rights remains as relevant today as it was on the day it was adopted.

Today is a solemn occasion to seriously ponder over the status of human rights as also the mechanisms and their effectiveness in the implementation of basic fundamental rights, which are inclusive of human dignity, right to food, healthcare, education, shelter and such other things. We must acknowledge that our fight continues to broaden the horizon of human rights until that day when no individual, woman or child is tortured, abused and denied of his or her dignity and when all human beings enjoy their human rights. However, for this, it is very much necessary to provide an improved environment for human rights and also to achieve social justice through human rights.

Our country is at the forefront in its advocacy of the promotion and protection of human rights. The quest for realization of human rights and respect for human dignity was core to our independence movement. The father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi, was widely recognized as among the foremost human rights activists of the world at the time the Universal Declaration was being drafted. India is a proud signatory to all important international conventions on human rights. Our Constitution is one of the noblest documents on human rights. Its Preamble solemnly resolves to secure to every citizen justice, liberty, equality and fraternity with dignity. The Persons with Disability Act of 1995 and the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities of 2006, the Right to Information Act of 2005 and the Right to Education Act of 2009 are just a few important policy frameworks which have further strengthened the human rights

movement. Legislation to provide food security is another step towards protection of human rights.

Ours is a country with differences of religion, caste, culture and language. Economic development and rapid urbanization and industrialization have contributed their own sets of vulnerable population groups- the migrants, the slum dwellers and the displaced population. So when we talk of securing human rights and social justice for all, it is not just about a small, largely homogeneous population. Actually it is about securing the rights of more than a billion people, immensely heterogeneous in their diversity. India's greatest asset and strength is its people. So, all efforts should be made to protect the fundamental rights of the people of the country and the human dignity of all, in particular of the vulnerable and the weaker sections of the society and of women by three wings of democracy, i.e., legislature, judiciary and executive and indeed, by the people themselves.

Human rights and democracy are closely intertwined. The defence of democracy itself means the defence of individual and collective human rights. In democratic societies, fundamental human rights and freedoms are put under the guarantee of law and therefore, protection of human rights calls for improved law enforcement and enforcing accountability for those who violate. Human rights must be protected if a society is to be stable and progressive.

Human rights, howsoever one looks at it, belong to all human beings. These rights are inherent and inalienable rights of each individual irrespective of religion, caste, creed, language or position and should be equal in their application to all human beings at all places and at all times because all human beings are born equal. These rights are fundamental to the very existence of mankind and not merely for the benefit of one class or one section of the society.

Human rights are central to the very concept of peace and development. Without human rights we cannot think of peace and development. The only lasting peace will be one that rests, as Mahatma Gandhiji had said, on recognition of the inherent dignity of every

person. We must know that in any society that values human beings as worthy of regard and respect, rights will surely be valued.

Constitutional commitment to economic, social and cultural rights is fundamental in the governance of the country. Ours is a rights-based approach to development in areas such as education, employment and food security, which are basic endowments for dignified human existence. In the context of pursuing the objective of development, my biggest concern is about people living in poverty. After all, poverty is the biggest violator of human rights. Poverty deprives the poor of human rights and basic entitlements like nutrition, shelter, education, health, safe drinking water and other elements of dignified living. Our foremost endeavour should be to eradicate poverty so as to enhance the access of the tribals, the poor and the deprived sections to the basic amenities of life and impart to them skills that equip them to find a decent livelihood.

Here I cite the case of tribals who continuously find themselves at the receiving end for no faults of theirs. Their major weakness is their intrinsic simplicity and this goes against them as their basic human rights are violated. Throughout the centuries the inalienable rights which resulted in their forced migration and rendered them destitutes in their own world. It is a question on how long shall we continue to deny our tribal sisters and brothers human rights and equality in our social and economic life? It has been well said, "Today's human rights violations are the causes of tomorrow's conflicts." If we continue to deny it for long, we will only be inviting disaster to our social as well as democratic set up.

Adivasis or tribals or indigenous people constitute about nine per cent of the total Indian population. What is special about tribals? Tribals enjoy a symbiotic relationship with nature. Their existence was never based on accumulation or consumerism. They took what they needed from nature, but never in excess. They never had a need to subdue, conquer or master nature. They take pride in their primitive art and culture and they never compromise with their self esteem.

The reality of the tribals' existence is nothing short of disturbing which is in contradiction to India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's lyrical descriptions about the tribes of India in his development guidelines where he urged our civil servants to respect adivasis. He emphasized upon Tribal Belt development and respect tribals' 'own genius' and not turning them 'into pale imitations of ourselves'. If we look for reasons we would find that every wildlife sanctuary in India includes at least some adivasi homelands; majority of the mines in India are on adivasi land; nearly 50 per cent of the mineral wealth of the entire country comes from adivasi areas, yet a large section of the entire adivasi population in India lives below the poverty line. Worst of all, the adivasis are slowly being pushed out of their ancestral lands - forced to migrate for work. They once led lives of quiet dignity. Now they live and die in quiet desperation. They find themselves at a profound disadvantage with respect to better-equipped intruders into tribal areas. The repercussions for the already fragile socio-economic livelihood base of the tribals were devastating resulting in loss of livelihoods and vast scale of land alienation. They are engaged in a fight for their rights.

Development appears to be overwhelming for the tribal society bringing profound change in tribal mores. For them, forest produces are increasingly inaccessible and similarly, the medicinal herbs are no longer available to cure their injuries and illnesses. Instead, they are forced to trek to the nearest doctor, typically one they cannot afford. It is irony that they are treated as intruders in their own land. It is nothing but serious case of violation of their human rights.

Tribals are a people forced into poverty for several factors. It is the consistent effort of the government to help tribal communities in a number of ways and foremost is to help them assert their rights, especially over land and forest. The Forests Rights Act of India, 2006 was an important legislation that gave legal recognition to the tribals' rights to the forests and their produce. But the goal of this legislation remains elusive; and the struggle for empowerment and human rights still continues. The Constitution of India proclaims "the dignity of the

individual" as a core value in its Preamble. Therefore, it is important that the development process in the country is equitable so that fruits of development reach everyone.

It is in this context that a campaign is sorely needed to protect human rights, I mean, the most fundamental the right to life. It is time to make amends to these as once proud people the adivasis have been historically wronged for centuries in the name of development and progress. I firmly hold the view that it is incumbent on every society to promote and protect human rights – civil, political, economic, social and cultural – without distinction of race, sex, language or religion. Moreover, we need to learn from tribals the way they protect environment as custodians of nature at a time when there has been an increased concern for protection of environment which itself is a viable human right.

On this occasion of Human Rights day, let us rededicate ourselves to sensitize people about human rights issues and to strive towards promoting a culture rooted in the values of peace, development, tolerance, harmony and universal brotherhood. I call upon all stakeholders from Government to civil society to do their best for the promotion and protection of human rights. Let us build a society fully committed to human rights and human dignity.

Jai Hind.

Valedictory Ceremony of Adivasi Mela- 2014

I am indeed delighted to be here this evening on the closing function of Adivasi Mela, the State Level Annual Adivasi Exhibition organized by the ST & SC Development Department. I always feel proud to be identified as an adivasi and obviously I am delighted to be with my fraternity. I am happy to visit this exhibition showcasing tribal tradition, culture, lifestyle and their exquisite tribal art and crafts which has its beginning on 26th January, 1951, a year after India became a Republic. The venue truly presents an impression of a tribal village and also a tribal market centre, and colourful ethnic dance by tribal troupes every evening provides viewers ample entertainment and at the same time an impression of their love for music, song and dance which finds expression in their folklore.

It is very gratifying to see so many visitors coming to the exhibition ground even on the last day and busy in collecting ethnic tribal products; be it tribal medicine, food stuff like cereals and spices or metal craft, cane and bamboo products. The craze of urban people for tribal products is primarily because of their intrinsic worth.

It is heartening to note that the Adivasi Mela, over the years, has been at the forefront promoting the indigenous art and crafts embodying the creative imagination of tribal artisans and craftsmen. It provides them an excellent platform to showcase and market their products and get good returns. In the process it has helped in taking tribal art and craft to new heights where these are not only appreciated but also raises their demand. This certainly gives a boost to the spirit of tribals and ensures more number of participation from tribal communities. I understand that a display of tribal painting was also put up here which found wide appreciation from the viewers. The exhibition provides good interaction among

the participating tribals and the visitors mostly from urban and non-tribal areas who became aware of tribal life.

Odisha has a very high concentration of tribal population. It is home to as many as 62 tribal communities including 13 Primitive Tribal Groups. They constitute about 23 per cent of total population of the State. More than one-third of the total area of the State has been declared as Scheduled Areas.

Living close to nature, tribals entirely depend on nature, forests and hills for sustenance and livelihood. They are the real custodians of forest produces and wealth. But with forest areas declining fast due to various purposes, it raises serious concern for survival of tribals who struggle to live and earn their livelihood. They should be allowed to live in harmony with nature and have to be made partners of our development process. The State as well as the Central Government is committed to the development and welfare of tribal community living in forests and remote areas, and several ambitious programmes have been launched with the sole objective of bringing improvements in their lifestyle and bringing them to the mainstream.

It is true that there has been the development of tribals to some extent because of the efforts of the Government but the desired objective has been as elusive as ever. It is a pity that tribal communities continue to remain backward and are subjected to various forms of exploitation in spite of several legislations to safeguard their rights. Their problems basically are poverty, illiteracy and inadequate healthcare. The failures do not lie with the tribal people. They are not at fault because of their birth or skin. They are very much like other human beings. They do not ask for any special protection. They want to be treated equally like every other Indian and, in broader sense, like every other human being. Disparity, discrimination and prejudice have to go paving way to the evolution of a just society.

When it is about implementing Government policies and programmes, I from my long experience, find that the link between

Government and tribals is somewhat missing and that is humane touch which is very important. You cannot expect to achieve desired objectives with reluctant officials and staff. The situation requires implementing officials and the field staff to be concerned, caring and compassionate and at the same time motivated and committed to the task who would be always willing to undertake confidence building measures to regain confidence and faith of tribals so that we expect them to welcome and extend support to Government efforts. Here, I would like to suggest for developing a complete separate cadre of officers for the Scheduled Areas which has earlier been successful in my own state Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.

Development in real sense cannot be achieved leaving behind this segment of our population which is a force to reckon with in sports and games and other activities. Regular monitoring and supervision will help successful implementation of various programmes at the grassroots and deliver the results to beneficiaries. For economic empowerment, tribal women should be encouraged to form self-help groups and be provided with all assistance. Nothing should be carried out that would compromise or forcefully compromise their hopes and aspirations. Simultaneously the tribals should learn to take advantage of the opportunities available in this fast changing world and equip themselves accordingly without sacrificing or polluting their age-old culture and tradition.

Education is the key for progress and development of tribals. It enables them to be aware of their rights and sharpens their world-view. When we look at the literacy figure of the tribals in the State and start comparing with the State's overall literacy rate, it is far from encouraging. The female literacy rate in tribal communities continues to be low. The situation needs a drastic change if we are to progress. The Government has taken a number of steps to encourage tribal girls to pursue their studies. We need to provide

right kind of infrastructure and atmosphere for all-round development of tribal children.

Today, I am happy to give away awards to the best adjudged stalls. I congratulate them and wish that it would inspire to put up new things next year to make strong impression on viewers.

With these words, I wish the Adivasi Mela to rise further high in its popularity in years ahead. Let all our efforts become successful in bringing the tribals into the mainstream and preserving the uniqueness of tribal culture and heritage. I am confident that the State Level Annual Adivasi Exhibition would soon feature as a major event in the national calendar and achieve its primary goal of inculcating the spirit of unity and cohesion among the tribals as well as their non-tribal brethren.

Jai Hind.

Seminar of UK- Odisha Partnership On Tackling Climate Change

I am happy to be present today in this important and relevant seminar on United Kingdom – Odisha partnership on "Tackling Climate Change" Let me extend my best wishes to the participants in the Seminar, which holds all the promise of being lively and enlightening. This is part of a week-long programme that celebrates the United Kingdom's relationship with the state of Odisha. It is indeed heartening to know that a series of activities will focus on a number of subjects which include UK and Odisha's collaborative partnership in trade and industry, climate change, education and the arts. The organizers deserve our commendation for choosing some pressing issues for deliberation.

The United Kingdom's relationship with Odisha is more than two hundred years old. History tells that it has been a sweet-sour relationship. The people of Odisha fondly remember the contribution of two Britishers, namely T.E. Ravenshaw and John Beams. Ravenshaw had done what any forward looking pragmatic administrator would have done. He established school and college in Cuttack. The College named after him the Ravenshaw College has now been transformed into a Unitary University. Everyone in Odisha knows what this institution has done to the evolution of Odisha as a modern and progressive looking state. The contribution of John Beams – fondly remembered as "Beams Saheb" – will never be forgotten as long as Odia literature and language is flourishing. His ground work and strong advocacy contributed to establishing Odia as an ancient language. He proved that Odia literature is one of the richest. That the state of Odisha was created on the basis of language is neither a coincidence nor an accident.

The early products of the erstwhile Ravenshaw College and contribution of Beams formed the edifice on which the future of

granting a separate state-status to Odia speaking people was built. So the connection is indeed an old one.

Now coming back to today's seminar, UK-Odisha Partnership on Tackling Climate Change. The issue of climate change has gathered immense importance in recent times considering the unprecedented pressure on nature and natural resources by human beings. Ancient wisdom through scriptures and other literature have advised mankind how best it can live as a friend to nature and how to use natural resources in a judicious way. Yet as we all are aware, wise words have almost always fallen on deaf ears. Both human deed and greed have taken their toll. I am sure those present here are aware of what is defined by climate change. In simpler terms, climate change is changes in the earth's weather, including changes in temperature, wind patterns and rainfall, especially the increase in the temperature of the earth's atmosphere that is caused by the increase of particular gases especially Carbon Dioxide. Anyway, recent studies indicate that the main driver of global warming is rising carbon dioxide levels from our fossil fuel burning.

Yes, we know the culprit. It is carbon dioxide. This villain causes global warming which ultimately results in climate change. However, on close scrutiny, it is evident that we humans are the culprits. But then further analysis and introspection will suggest that the indigenous people, tribal people all over the globe, people living in remote rural areas are not the culprits! Those are the majority millions—the silent millions—who for thousands of years have been living with nature, contributing in their own humble way to the protection of nature. On the other hand we, who are driven by materialism and a growth centric culture, have been putting enormous pressure on nature and natural resources by being exploitative in an irrational way. So much so that the greatest living scientist of our times, Stephen Hawking has already warned us of the consequences. Hawking's contention is that unless we mend our ways soon, we will have to find another planet for survival after 200 years! The line of thinking adopted by those at the root of carbon dioxide emission is a

pretty simple one: Two hundred years is a long time! In reality, it is not.

The key lies in mending our ways. I am sure today's deliberation focuses on finding out ways and means; and put in place a concrete and implementable mechanism to cheek carbon dioxide emission. What best we can do to keep a control over global warming? The problem is best left to the scientists and dedicated environmentalists. Of course the plan and policy makers should come forward in a bold way to show solidarity with scientists and environmentalists. This is also easier said than done. Let us not shy away from the truth. Industries control markets, markets control economy. And nations cannot move without industries! This is a vicious cycle. Our efforts to mend our ways are not even one percent in proportion to the damage we have been causing to nature. Three / Four large industrial units emit the amount of harmful gases more than the whole of indigenous, tribal and rural people of a country put together! Do we all know where to act, how to act and how hard to act. The most difficult part is implementation of resolutions. It is heartening that nations have joined hands, scientists have intensified research and policy makers show positive intent, yet how far the imperatives of an industry – market driven economy or society can be kept at bay is to be seen.

Let me quote what Winston Churchill had said years ago, "Mankind has never been in this position before. Without having improved appreciably in virtue or enjoying wiser guidance, it has got into its hand for the first time the tools by which it can unfailingly accomplish its own extermination. That is the point in human destinies to which all the glories and toils of men have at last led them. They would do well to pause and ponder upon their new responsibilities. Death stands at attention, obedient, ready; if called on to pulverize what is left of civilisation." Of course Churchill has referred to modern weaponry at man's command. Yet what stares at us is a bigger danger, the pressure of which is neither seennor easily felt, but has the capacity to wipe out biological species from this planet and make it a barren

one. Churchill's advice to "pause and ponder" does not hold any ground at present, for mankind has already crossed that phase as it has entered a phase where only concrete action is the need of the hour. Man has to return to his roots and fall back on ancient wisdom of loving, nurturing, respecting and preserving nature.

Odisha's position can be discussed vis-a-vis the global position. Climate change and global warming has left its footprints in Odisha in the forms of rising sea level, cyclones, irregular rainfall pattern, rising temperature, increase in pest population, rise in malaria related deaths etc. Local people in Ganjam district's Gopalpur area say that one fishermen-village has been completely devoured by sea. Villagers believe that rising sea levels are a result of increasing atmospheric temperature and they also link rising temperatures to the increasing frequency of low pressures. Cyclones with increased ferocity have battered Odisha in recent times. People in seaside villages say that after each cyclone sea level rose significantly and submergence of nearby land was quicker. Cyclone statistics reveals that out of the 964 cyclones recorded in India during the period 1877-1990, 422 have struck Odisha. Coastal people have been wise enough to begin their work without spending much. However, prudent planning coupled with intensive research and a strong will for implementation will help us achieve the desired objective.

The background note given to me has indicated three broad objectives of the seminar. Climate Change Innovation Programme is a five year – twelve million pound programme. As stated Odisha is one of the most vulnerable states to the impact of change about which I have briefly indicated. It is heartening that a good beginning has been made. The Government of Odisha has already notified the formation of sectoral State-level low carbon committees to fine tune and implement the recommended fiscal instruments.

Climate change is a global phenomenon. Carbon emissions of one part of the globe affect another part. To find fault either with public or private sector is like hunting for something which in reality is non-existent. The Governments world over and the private sector

should be united to tackle this issue. People like Bill Gates and our own Narayan Murthy have been spending millions for the cause of the people and society. Similar should be the attitude of the private sector in general. It should contribute to the global efforts in tackling this hydraheaded monster. The planet neither belongs to the Governments nor to the private sector. It belongs to all of us and it belongs to those who are not born yet.

We have the best brains worldwide; I think the future of mankind as well as the future of this beautiful little planet is in safe hands. I am optimistic of that. As I near the end of this address, let me quote two great writers; one American and the other British. I hope, through them

I will be able to drive home to point.

Mark Twain once remarked, "'Do not go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first."

Let me now quote George Bernard Shaw, "The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man!"

Both these great writers were known for their wit and sense of humour. Yet we should politely recognize the understated or hidden message for the modern man. We must admit and realize that the world was here first and it owes us nothing! We must not exploit it to a point of no return. And yes – Bernard Shaw is right: all progress depends on the unreasonable man! Is it too harsh an observation or too cruel a humour on all those great minds who championed the cause of progress? May be yes, may be no! But the hidden message here is : the voice of the reasonable man has always been suppressed.

Now the time has come to hear that voice, the voice of the reasonable man. With these words, I again thank the organizers of such a meaningful exercise.

Jai Hind.

National Conference on Conservation of Eastern Ghats

I am delighted to be here this morning for the inauguration of the National Conference on Conservation of Eastern Ghats. I congratulate the Utkal University and the Greens' Alliance for Conservation of Eastern Ghats (GrACE), Hyderabad for organizing this very important Conference which I feel is a welcome one from the interest of Odisha as it finds itself one among the four States lying on the 1700 k.m. stretch of Eastern Ghats. I convey my warm felicitations to all the participating delegates.

There have been efforts in the past for bringing into limelight the urgency for conservation of Himalayas and the Western Ghats. I understand that the Council for Green Revolution and Environmentalists have formed Greens' Alliance for Conservation of Eastern Ghats (GrACE). It is a gigantic task of initiating people's movement for conservation of Eastern Ghats - the vast and unique mountain ranges on the eastern part of the country. The endeavor surely deserves appreciation.

Today Environmental degradation has become a major and serious global concern and it has been on the rise across the globe. Therefore global commitment for environment must reflect in such type of initiative which is always welcome and should be fully supported.

For our nation with a teeming population, it becomes a great challenge to strike a balance between natural heritage and population and its development goals. We need to devise policy that will facilitate development to co-exist with environment and not putting environment at the risk. Conservation of environment, our mountain ranges, forests and biodiversity and promoting sustainable development should be our prime agenda.

The Eastern Ghats of merging hills and meandering rivers that stretches from the state of West Bengal in the northern region,

through Andhra Pradesh and Odisha to Tamil Nadu in the southern part of India covering a distance of 1700 k.m. is full of varied ecological riches; it is a home to various tribal groups. It has enormous wealth of amazing endemic species, natural resources and of course natural beauty. This discontinuous range of mountains has a great influence on ecology, economy, culture and spiritual spheres of all the four States through which it is passing.

In fact, a significant portion of the Eastern Ghats lies in Odisha. Eastern Ghats of Odisha have immense ecological, economic, socio-cultural and ethnic significance. One finds a great amount of state's biodiversity, ethnic diversity, mineral wealth and serenity in the mountain range. The hills help maintaining regional environmental balance and are a lifeline for many in this part of country.

The rich environmental heritage is under tremendous pressure due to deforestation, growing population and development interventions and other difficult challenges. The effects of global warming add a catastrophic threat towards a mass extinction of global biological diversity. Statistics reveal that the threat of extinction is estimated to be more rapid by 2050. It is serious, alarming and urgent. It is high time that we analyze in depth the causes which pose a threat to nature and also develop strategies to address these issues. We must remember that climate change, deforestation and urban development are some of the most significant and insidious threats to biodiversity and ecosystem processes. The conservation and sustainability aspect must be valued highly and taken seriously. We must be again and again reminded that the wealth of plains depends on the health of the mountains.

It is imperative that we protect, manage and regenerate the lands in the Eastern Ghats as biologically rich, diverse, natural landscapes. We have reached a threshold from which we cannot slip further. This has to be the objective of future planning and regulation.

Each one of us have a responsibility; a responsibility to foster, nurture and preserve the nature in its pristine form. We have been enjoying the fruits of nature and the resources from this planet. We have to hand over this precious heritage intact to the future generation. Creation of awareness among the people, especially the youth on the preservation of nature and on conservation of the forests is the need of the hour. I am of the view that involving indigenous population in conservation efforts would augur well for the Eastern Ghats. There should also be a focused approach to protect the rights of tribals, besides offering them an option of livelihood.

I am aware that prior to this national conference, four regional conferences were already held. I am sure that such conferences will not only dwell in depth on the issues that pose a great threat to the forests, its richness, the environment and nature, but will also formulate strategies to inculcate in people and particularly in youth the spirit of living in harmony with nature.

It is true that the Eastern Ghats has not received its long-pending due. This effort will surely be a path finder to highlight Eastern Ghats to a great extent. I am happy that the Alliance is an important initiative. It shows an example on how collaborative efforts of many individuals and organisations have focussed on improvement of forests and their sustainable management on the ground. Those who are present here today will be paving a way for better and improved partnership for forests in Eastern Ghats mountain range. This conference, I hope will put your cooperation into a new track.

I am confident that the National Conference on Conservation of Eastern Ghats attended by academicians, environmentalists, scientists, researchers, students, development experts, civil society group activists and government and private organizations will be highly enlightening, informative and productive. I am sure; it will help in bringing people, associations and organizations having passion for nature and its conservation

together in a mission mode to work for the cause of conservation of Eastern Ghats. I would like to appeal to the people to do their bit in safeguarding the forests and biodiversity, as the optimum impact on the environment would only be felt by individual intervention. Let us pledge to conserve forests and preserve nature in its pristine form.

With these words, I wish you success in achieving new ambitious goals. I also wish fruitful deliberations and a rewarding conference.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of National Philatelic Exhibition on Nature and Environment

I am delighted to be with you today for the inauguration of National Philatelic Exhibition - 'Naturepex- 2016'. The exhibition showcases Nature, Flora and Fauna and Environment and it has the sole objective to make people aware of the need for protection of nature and conserve our environment. Since the Exhibition is the first of its type in the country let me congratulate the organiser, Eastern India Philatelists' Association and also India Post and KIIT International School, the collaborating partners. I find that the Eastern India Philatelists' Association was founded in 1998 by some enthusiastic stamp collectors, with the objective of promoting philately by creating awareness. Since then it has organised several exhibitions and is taking up a number of promotional activities. I am happy to note that Odisha have made its mark in Philately both in the country and abroad.

I am told that participants here have displayed exhibits portraying a large range of environmental themes from flora and fauna, biological diversity, pollution to endangered species, ecological imbalances etc. The exhibition, a competitive one will be having a series of activities for school children under different categories. Besides, India Post is releasing Special Covers and Picture Postcards depicting the theme.

Philately is a hobby which has immense educational value. Small stamps tell big stories about virtually every aspect of human life - art, science, culture, history and nature. It is said that postage stamps are "the windows of a nation through which the people may behold its heritage and history". In this way, philately fosters cultural understanding and strengthens universal brotherhood. On the other hand it sharpens the curiosity and enhances the creativity, particularly among the youth.

I am therefore delighted that this exhibition which has participants from different parts reflects the role philately plays in

promoting awareness and philately as a hobby. We in India have always promoted philately as a means of building cultural bridges among nations and civilisations.

India has a long history of philatelic services. This can be traced to the year 1941 more precisely 21st June, 1941 when philatelic services started with the first Philately Bureau of the country at Mumbai's General Post Office (GPO). This year, the Department of Post celebrates 75 years of specialised philatelic services. What is interesting is that this first Philately Bureau of the country still remains the only international bureau in the country.

The theme of the Exhibition that is 'Save our Environment' is certainly the utmost concern of the world. Man has an intimate relationship with nature since time immemorial. It is our obligation to find tangible ways of preserving the natural environment. The question is not limited to our state or country, it is a global concern.

Climate change has become one of the most complex and challenging issues facing humankind. It is a big and threatening reality. New and unforeseen climatic events occur everyday, evidence that accelerated climate change is perceptible and now droughts are quite frequent, and oceans get warm up. We are seeing extreme weather events, and increased temperatures, decades ahead of scientific projections. Thus it has emerged as the largest security threat.

Today I talk to you as a concerned citizen to realise the seriousness and save our nature and environment. Clean air and water, and a liveable climate are inalienable human rights. And solving this crisis is not a question of politics. It is our moral obligation, admittedly, a daunting one.

Our planet is unique and precious. We are grateful to its bounty as it is key for our very survival in many ways. But it is our greed that does the undoing and brings great damage of to our nature and environment. Humankind must become accountable on a massive scale for the cruel destruction of our collective home. Protecting our future on this planet depends on the conscious evolution of our species. For

Earth to return to harmony it is to restore the harmonious principles within ourselves and to act as responsible caretakers.

Probing deep into the natural world is a great source of excitement and a great source of visual beauty. It has also generated a great deal of intellectual interest. If we are really serious to save mother Earth from further destruction let us be wise and plant a tree. Our timely thought and action are crucial for the big cause of conservation. Therefore, we should strive to plant trees as much as possible, for a clean and green environment and for the sake of our future generation.

Stamps are vehicles of knowledge for any age group. The educational value is limitless. Apart from educational value, philately is an exercise for artistic and creative abilities. On philately, I would say that there is no limit to scope that this hobby offers. I wish India Post and Eastern India Philatelic Association must come together like this one to hold more District and State level exhibitions in days ahead.

I would like to commend once again all the participants of the Exhibition and the organisers. I hope that they would gain not only a wealth of knowledge but a greater appreciation of how stamps and philatelic materials are invaluable "windows" to spread a global concern.

With these words, I wish the 'Naturepex-2016' all success.

Jai Hind.

YOUTH , CHILDREN AND WOMEN ISSUES

Seminar on Crisis in Gender Justice

I am happy to be here today in this Seminar on "Crisis in Gender Justice" organized by the Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UCCI) as part of its corporate social responsibility initiatives. I am given to understand that besides the excellent work it is doing in meeting its primary objectives and towards Odisha's industrial resurgence the UCCI has formed the CSR and Community Development Committee with a goal to serve the community through dispensation of its social responsibilities and build a better tomorrow. By taking up the cause of gender justice, UCCI has certainly shown its concern to fight against discrimination and injustice towards women and create an awareness to form a just society. Distribution of aids and appliances by the UCCI to persons with disabilities also deserves appreciation.

Today we are here to discuss on gender justice. I was listening keenly to earlier speakers and they have spoken vividly on women's role in society and their rights. Crisis in gender justice has been a big worry for all of us and it is not at all acceptable in a civilized society. This down sliding of moral values should be checked or else it will be too late to stop the disaster looming large over the society. I take this opportunity to share with you various dimensions of gender justice and the challenges ahead.

Gender Justice is a bigger and wider term that encompasses every facet of life from birth to death. In this current scenario intolerance and discrimination towards women is an all-pervasive malady. Various forms of violation against women and girls are on the increase and it is roughly estimated more than 60 million women who should be alive today are missing because of violence associated with gender discrimination. Millions of women and girls live under the daily threat of physical abuse.

Violence against women is quite reprehensible as it deprives them of their human rights and prevents them opportunities to achieve social, political, economic and legal equality in the society. Justice to

women folk is a continuous process which is badly being resisted at every turn. Often half of the population are deprived of their legitimate dues. An inherent gender bias pervades in every sphere and it is high time that we bury gender discrimination from the womb to the tomb.

The framers of our Constitution have given vast power for the three instrumentalities of the State to ensure gender justice

Article – 14, 15 and 16 of the Constitution have mandated equality of the sexes. Part-IV of the Constitution is rich with provisions to defend the dignity of women. Within the parameters of this Constitution there is great scope for legislative and administrative amelioration of women's condition. During 65 years of India's Independence an enormous number of legislations are available and administrative schemes are being implemented to take care of the welfare of women and girls. But even so, exploitation, deprivation and discrimination still persist. It constantly reminds us the onerous challenges towards gender justice and gender inequality.

We have legal provisions for prevention of oppression of women and protection of their rights. However, despite these provisions, equality between men and women continues to be an elusive goal not only in our country but all over the world. In our country, the gap is wide between the ideal and practice. Preference of son over a daughter plays the spoilsport. Declining sex ratio among children is a serious concern for all of us. The myth of inherent male feeling of superiority jeopardizes gender justice.

Lack of education among women is one of the major reasons for their unequal status in society. Proper education will bring liberation for the women and make them aware of their rights and opportunities available to make a career. Educated women have been able to make a career. Educated women have been able to successfully foray into many professions and have proved the world that being a woman is never a disqualification. Women's liberation signifies freedom of choice. Self help groups have done wonders in helping rural women to achieve economic freedom and equality. Discrimination in terms of health or education or denying opportunities

to grow on the basis of sex is not acceptable. We must ensure that our women possess the freedom to choose and the right to excel. I am of the view that employment and empowerment of women need to be linked properly.

It goes without saying that we have to set right our attitudes and wipe out the atmosphere of prejudice and neglect that prevails towards women. It is all about treating men and women as human beings, people gifted with the same faculties, subject to the same feelings and entitled to equality of opportunity and status.

I strongly believe that no progress that no progress for any nation can be stable, sensible or equitable, unless the egalitarian solidarity of sisters and brothers, daughters and sons, husbands and wives, women and men becomes a living reality. Let us be committed and resolve to work towards this reality. A series of seminars and conferences should be held with the thrust on women's liberation and empowerment, elimination of injustice towards them and a united march into the future.

I am sure this seminar would explore ways in which women could be empowered to live with dignity and equality.

With these words, I once again express my happiness to participate in this seminar and wish it achieves its purpose.

Jai Hind.

International Day of Peace

It is not only a pleasure for me, but a real privilege, to get a platform to reiterate my solidarity to the cause of peace which I have been doing throughout my life. Today I am happy to participate in the observance of the International Day of Peace and at the same time inaugurate the first Odisha Children and Youth Peace Festival amidst very enthusiastic participants and others who practice and spread the message of peace and love. It is my pleasure to extend good wishes to all the participants and all those who are involved with this maiden peace festival.

Holding a peace festival for children and youth in Odisha, earlier known as Kalinga which had spread the message of peace to far off countries is most appropriate. Any initiative to promote peace is always welcome and it deserves commendation. I congratulate MasterPeace Club India and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), co-organisers of the festival for their effort to propagate and promote peace which has enduring relevance for the whole world. I express my thanks for inviting me to this celebration of peace.

As we observe the International Day of Peace our mind goes to peace activists and volunteers who are busy in peace building activities at the local and global level and mobilizing people to work for the sake of peace and we express our gratitude for the noble work. I find that MasterPeace is an international peace initiative with a goal to involve people in building peace and it has chosen a four principle path where it puts : Music above Fighting, Dialogue above Judgment, Bread above Bombs and Creation above Destruction. MasterPeacers as the volunteers are called are working on a variety of areas to promote peace. I am given to understand that MasterPeace Club India, one of the organizers of today's programme has been emphasizing on voluntary effort and youth activism to make every one stands for peace. The other organizer, KISS has set an example of empowering tribal children with education and in the process making them torchbearers of peace. These children have showed their talent and are

excelling in different spheres. I congratulate the management on the success of KISS.

Today we observe the UN International Day of Peace. United Nations, as we know continues to lead the efforts towards achieving global peace. By making a global call to observe this International Day of Peace as part of its effort to promote one of the most fundamental of human rights, the Right to Peace, U.N. reminds us that our permanent commitment, above all interests or differences of any kind, is to establish peace. Here, I would like to quote the suggestions stated in the U.N. Resolution that led to the birth of this particular day. It said, "Peace Day should be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and people." Since its inception this day is being celebrated organizing a number of events. The day gives us opportunity to realize the importance of peace in our daily life as well as for nations, and reiterates our faith on peace.

The 20th century left us a legacy of war and conflict among nations. Unfortunately, the 21st century started in a similar way. Inspite of all efforts, peace has remained elusive as the incidence of violence, intolerance and religious fundamentalism has taken serious turn. Weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons continue to present one of the greatest threats to humanity. Use of such weapons has devastating consequences for these are the most powerful tool for destroying life. Recently we have seen how the chemical weapons of Syria killed many innocent lives. These weapons pose a serious threat to a world that wants and seeks peace.

Technological advancement has no doubt eradicated many human miseries from the modern world. But it has also been the cause of growing violence as countries in different parts of the world indulge in violent conflicts. It is time to renew efforts to stop the tragedy of war and conflict. We have to explore avenues to combat such violence and establish peace.

India guided by the vision of leaders like Gandhiji and Nehruji has always worked for peace and good understanding between nations. When we talk of peace there is no other better example before us than

our beloved Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji had shown the whole world the power of non-violence in driving the mighty British from our soil. It is a great honour for the Mahatma and the millions of Indians when the United Nations declared to observe 2nd October, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi as the 'International Day of Non-violence.' The world community acknowledges the core relevance of Gandhian principles of non-violence and peace in settling conflict, alleviating poverty and other issues to ensure a peaceful world.

Every day and every moment we feel the necessity of peace in our life and also at the global level. It poses a serious question before us. Why can't we live at peace? It seems strange that we can't find a way of living in which there is neither conflict, nor misery, nor confusion but a great abundance of love and fellow feeling. The preamble of UNESCO's constitution maintains that 'since the war begins in the minds of men it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed.' It is the mind which needs to be fed with nourishment from values like love, compassion, harmony, tolerance, caring and sharing. Peace can be built only through 'Education'. Education, therefore has to play important and positive role than ever before.

The theme for this year's International Day of Peace, "Education for Peace" is indeed appropriate and relevant. Every society in every age has acknowledged peace as a noble and necessary ideal. It is a prime requirement for progress and development. Conflicts destroy the framework for a better quality of life. Implementing education for peace is not only an appropriate strategy for conflict resolution and conflict avoidance but also a pro-active investment in realizing a peaceful world. Education for peace acknowledges the goal of promoting a culture of peace and making responsible citizens who live in harmony with others. Education for peace is holistic. It seeks to nurture knowledge, skill, attitudes and values that comprise a culture of peace. I view education for peace as education for life, and not merely training for a livelihood. It has a

two-fold purpose. First, it is to empower individuals to choose the path of peace rather than the path of violence and second is to enabling them to be peace makers rather than the consumers or destroyers of peace. For this to happen education has to go beyond the warehousing of information to a celebration of awareness which is best facilitated through education for peace. When we live in an age of unprecedented violence, locally, nationally and globally education for peace is the need of hour to groom the future generation and society with right values and attitudes.

It is heartening to find that the theme of the first Odisha Children and Youth Festival is "Peace Promotion through Children and Youth". Let me quote the words of Mahatma Gandhiji which are appropriate here and he said, "If we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children."

We must accept that children are an asset of the nation. To make this asset productive, our investment must be on their all round development. Compared to adults, all children are vulnerable by nature. Many children find themselves in a downward spiral where each shock leads to a new level of vulnerability, and each new level opens up for a host of new risks. It is said that the mind of a child is like clay and is receptive to all ideas. So the seeds of tolerance must first be sown right into the minds and hearts of children. As they grow into youthhood, respect for existence of individuals of whatever religion, or ethnic group or nation, gender or color, or socio-economic status should be nurtured and the seeds of peace must be sown vigorously. Our goal is to preserve the future human capital of the country and the world. Therefore, engaging them in peace processes and socializing them as peacemakers and peace-builders early on is important.

Promotion of peace starts first with the family. For children and youth, the family must be perceived as a place of close relationship and of mutual concern. If the culture of peace is developed at the family level, then it develops more effectively at the community and village

level, and upwards. Beyond the family, school can become a platform to understand the concept and practice of peace in curriculum, classroom, and co-curricular programmes. Parents and adults and teachers as well must model tolerance and compassion in their words and behavior.

The world today is passing through an environment full of tensions, violence, declining values, injustice, reduced tolerance and lack of respect for human rights. The gun culture has already taken a dominant position in most of the countries, threatening the future of the youth who become unfortunate instruments in conflicts mainly because of circumstances. The transition of youth to adulthood is severely affected by violence. The best way to prevent them is to promote healthy and balanced economic and social development. They deserve a peaceful and better quality of life.

Youth with their enthusiasm, new ideas, and new energy can greatly contribute to peace development. There is a greater need to create a culture of peace in society through participation of the youth. With adequate support, they can become agents for change and provide a foundation for rebuilding lives and communities, contributing to a more just and peaceful society. Peace education programmes seek to educate children and youth about resolving disputes through peaceful means, the importance of human rights, and the virtues of dialogue, tolerance and diversity.

Instead of mere preaching and instructions children and youth need to be involved in all kinds of cultural, artistic and sports activities so as to promote peace and fellow feeling by bringing them together. I am happy to note that participants during this Peace Festival will get opportunity to participate in different events and I am sure they will surely feel the difference of before and after the festival. Development of children and youth as productive citizens and peace workers could be a starting point for developing the peace culture.

All of us at the community, state, national, and international levels should agree that our children and youth are responsible to

ensuring that the 21st century is characterized as a century of peace. It is my vision that peace is and must be the creed of the 21st century.

The world today is indeed in search of a new culture based on non-violence, tolerance, mutual understanding, solidarity, and the ability to solve disputes and conflicts peacefully. Here again I would like to quote our beloved Mahatma Gandhiji who had said, "The cry for peace will be a cry in the wilderness, so long as the spirit of non-violence does not dominate millions of men and women". I would like to urge all present here to live according to the highest ideal of non-violence, translate the same into action and also work for the propagation of peace. With these words, I wish this first Odisha Children and Youth Peace Festival all success.

Jai Hind.

World Camp Organised by International Youth Fellowship

Let me at the outset extend a hearty welcome to all the young men and women who have assembled here from different parts of the world in this beautiful state, Odisha. This is a state known worldwide for her unique cultural heritage, temple and other monuments many of which are architectural marvels and abundant natural resources – minerals, forests, waterfalls and extravagant sea beaches and a rich variety of dance and music. I also take this opportunity to thank the International Youth Fellowship – India for having given me an opportunity to share some of my ideas, experiences and impressions. Odisha, as you would know sooner or later, and as has been my experience over a period of six months, is a peaceful land with 62 indigenous tribes living in harmony with nature and others. The state is known for peaceful coexistence, tolerant attitude and unique hospitality of Odia people. Hence, it is significant and appropriate that this World Camp is organized here.

It is heartening that the objectives of IYF are (a) growing leaders of the next generation (b) advancement of youth and (c) constructing a bright and healthy society. It is indeed really a great idea that the IYF has targeted the youth on whose shoulders lies the future of this great nation, the largest and the most vibrant democracy aspiring to become the strongest and the mightiest nation on the planet, leaving behind rival nations in the fields of economic prosperity, manufacturing sector, defense, science, creation of new knowledge, healthcare services and above all, art-culture-literature! Members of an old bygone era like me, who had seen both India as a sad and fettered nation under the colonial rule and India as a vibrant independent nation under the dynamic leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, have unflinching faith in the ability of our youth! For me, the youth are the strength, dream and the future of India.

Yet, as I look at your bright and shining faces oozing confidence, I am transported down the memory lane to my younger days when as a tribal boy from a non-descript village in Nagaland I was determined to pursue higher education in the then Calcutta. My generation was brought up in a period of transition ¬ the freedom of India was imminent and all in the country dreamt of an India where there would be no repression, no torture, no discrimination on the basis of caste – creed – religion, no exploitation, no marginalization; but a society of equality, dignity, peace, caring and compassion. However, that was not to be. Morals started crumbling all around us, in personal life as well as in other spheres. The signs of development were everywhere – healthcare, infrastructure, science, education, energy, atomic and nuclear and agriculture pursuits! Exceptionally brilliant people in different fields contributed to India's march on the roads of progress and prosperity. As people and society prospered and as materialism took centre stage, our values and morals came under severe onslaught from consumerism and globalization. Then the protective forces – the protective walls of morality, patriotism, nationalism, care, compassion and commitment started crumbling slowly and steadily. We are at present living in a time where India is considered the youngest nation, with the world's maximum number of people being in the age group of 25-30 years! This, I would say, is enormous human resources and this needs to be shown the right path to yield the best results.

However, any great mission has to have a sound edifice on which the strong pillars of ideals, morals, ethics and values should rest, so that the thrust forward does not cause any pull-down effect. What I mentioned about India and Indian society is true of any other country and society: be it America or England, Germany or Russia, France or Finland, Cameroon or Cambodia! Only the difference lies in degree, not in the type or nature of degeneration or degradation: corruption, violence, rape, child labour, error of judgment by many in the top echelons of power, nepotism, abuse of executive as well as judicial powers, spread of drugs and what not! The challenge before us is

cleansing our society of these vices and also; cleansing our souls, replacing negativism with positivism, pessimism with optimism, hatred with love, indifference with compassion, corruption with transparency, laziness with hard work and intolerance with truth and honesty!

My dear young friends, the International Youth Fellowship by organizing this World Camp has done a commendable job in uniting the youth of different countries on a single platform. Such World Camps is also organized in different countries, spreading the right message and infusing the right spirit, the spirit of love, peace, compassion, hard work and commitment in youth.

As the objective of World Camp is to develop a comprehensive global outlook in today's youth through cultural understanding and cultivate global mindset among the future leaders by guiding them to accept people who are different, I am sure, guidance will have to come from people who are determined and committed to rebuilding and restructuring the pillars of society that have been destroyed by negative forces. Once parochialism gives way to a broad new world order, the work will be much easier. And drawing from my own experience gathered over nearly seven decades, I would like to tell the youth of today that there is no better way than the spiritual way.

The Bible contains many stories and parables that teach us, guide us, inspire us and give us strength to pursue the objective. Such a moving story is contained in 'The Book of Nehemiah'. I hope, all of you would read that and will absorb the essence of it. You would soon understand that there is a discipline in pursuing one's own goals. One can not just begin being emotionally courageous and adventurous. These steps, as depicted in the Book, are– identification of the problem, concern about the problem, concrete planning, involving as many people as possible, begin work by creating leaders from among people themselves. However, all along you must seek the blessing of God the Almighty. This, my dear young men and women, is the right time to begin and these are the outlines of the roadmap to be pursued.

India is growing at a fast pace and by 2025, all of us are optimistic that India would be ahead of most countries, only a handful few would be ahead of her, or equal to her. However, India's march onto peace, progress and prosperity can not be a one-way traffic process; because as information technology has transformed the world into a huge global village and as millions of new information and new knowledge fly thick and fast on information super-highway, India simply can not afford to leave anyone behind! Patriotism and nationalism will strengthen our commitment to the cause of the motherland, as well as preserve our identity and unique culture, but the outlook and attitude have to be global. And in a global village, if one part is preoccupied with hunger, epidemic, violence, civil war and fundamentalism, can the other part march ahead in peace? Self-centric approach will have to give way to an inclusive approach and short-term perspective will have to be replaced with long-term perspectives.

My dear young friends, can a global citizen be full of hatred, jealousy and intolerance? Can scientific and industrial progress be devoid of humility, humanity and concern for the fellow humans? The answers, as we all know, is No. This is where "The Bible" helps us and this is where the spirit of Nehemiah guides us. For that matter, all scriptures of the world have been sending messages to society for centuries after centuries, loud and clear, to defeat evil by the weapons of ethics and morals, by ways of love, compassion and caring. We need to heed to them; in fact, we need to hear the call of our inner soul. Those who heeded and those who used the weapons of ethics, values and morals have always guided us, guided the society; in fact, guided the civilization.

Friends, this World Camp is held here, in KIIT- a unique academic institution that has revolutionized higher and technical education in Odisha. All of you will be surprised to know that another sister institution of KIIT, the KISS – Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences provides completely free education to poor tribal children from KG to PG level – absolutely no cost is charged. The founder of both KIIT and KISS, Dr. Achyut Samant is a young man like you and

he was much younger when he started this; but he had perhaps two things in mind – dream to do something and determination to do good to others. Acts like these enrich our society and lives. Ethics and morals are all about changing lives, and I am sure, all of you will be guided by the spirit of the Bible and other scriptures and make ethics, morals, values and love, compassion your capital; and invest this capital in constructing society and changing lives.

With these words, I again wish you all the very best in future, for the future belongs to you. People of my generation would not be around to see your achievement or India's glorious march; yet we are sure the future of this great nation as well as this beautiful planet is in safe hands.

Jai Hind.

36th Regional Conference of Eastern India Region of YMCAS

Today I am happy to address the 36th Regional Conference of Eastern India Region of YMCAs at this opening session. I am thankful for the invitation for it enables me to renew my long association with YMCA. At the outset, I wish you all a very good evening.

It is heartening that YMCA Cuttack is hosting this Regional Conference. President Dr. Mohanty, in his address, has shared a brief history of the YMCA Cuttack. YMCA Cuttack is over 100 years old, a venerable age indeed, an age studded with selfless service and honour. I find that the YMCA Cuttack was established in 1893 by Utkal Gaurav Madhusudan Das, an illustrious son of Odisha. Of course, the first YMCA in India/Asia was started in 1857 at Calcutta. However, YMCA Cuttack stands as a milestone in the growth of YMCA movement in India.

YMCA, founded in the year 1844 at London City by Sir George Williams on Christ's ideal of sacrificial love has grown to be recognised as one of the oldest and largest movements for youth in the world. This youth-focused, membership based, voluntary movement seeks to impart a humane touch to the community tempered with love and peace. The purpose of YMCA is for development of body, mind and spirit of youth which is symbolized in its universally accepted emblem, the equilateral red triangle pointed downwards represents the multi-faceted development of an individual.

I am happy to note that YMCA Cuttack, since its inception has not only provided Cuttack and Odisha with wholehearted social services, support to the affected people at the time of natural calamities, undertook various projects and programmes for the underprivileged, formed Self help Groups (SHGs) to empower women but also given a platform to the youth of the State to excel in the field of games and sports and it is heartening that many youngsters having spent initial years in YMCA went on to build their professional careers and brought glory to Odisha. I am glad that the YMCA Cuttack has

been active in serving the community in many meaningful ways, and the people have also responded to them enthusiastically. I commend the efforts of the dedicated members.

YMCA Cuttack is legitimately proud of its heritage. It is my hope and belief that the YMCA Cuttack will continue its good work and pioneer new and innovative ways of serving the community, to achieve its aim of touching lives and lifting spirits. I wish everyone associated with YMCA Cuttack all the very best to make the journey more glorious and achieve new heights.

YMCA's history is glorious and mission is laudable. YMCA activities are always prompted by concern for the needy. Since its establishment, the YMCA has made important contributions in the social services and educational sectors. It has pioneered and sustained many initiatives through the years which have been highly appreciated. It is good to see many people taking advantage of the sports and fitness services and children and youth in the recreational activities in their local YMCAs.

YMCA stands on its commitment in ensuring that every person, regardless of age, income, or background, finds the basic opportunity to learn and thrive. Providing adequate means to the youth without any distinction of caste, colour, sex or race has remained a cornerstone of YMCA's effort to engage and enrich mind, body and soul.

YMCA has been creating platforms for our youth to engage in volunteer activities and is promoting social entrepreneurship and community leadership. YMCA is known for grooming the youth for greater challenges of life and also for its social services for the under-privileged, work to help the needy, spreading love and care in the society, and sustaining social cohesion. It has indeed mobilised a very valuable social resource to serve the community, lighting up not only the lives of beneficiaries but also the benefactors themselves.

Over the years I have met and interacted with many of the YMCA members. It is quite heartening to note that our youth often find impetus in translating their values and beliefs into action under the

auspices of YMCA, many a youth galvanize their journey from a vulnerable youth to an empowered young person able to lead, share, give, and inspire. As members of YMCA they know it better, giving is a greater blessing than receiving.

Experience in YMCA is indeed empowering. YMCA imbued in many youth self-esteem, self-confidence and ability of doing incredible things. With YMCA one learns to dream, learns to serve, and feels good by helping other people as a volunteer and as a citizen. It helps developing the spirit to become an agent of change. I congratulate YMCA for its continued support towards promoting values-in-action, and in developing our youth the motivation to become concerned citizens and active contributors to society.

As our society progresses, the aspirations of youth also rise. I am encouraged that our society places a high value on learning - this is an important way for our youth to realise their aspirations and to create opportunities for themselves and others. I am happy that the local YMCA's initiatives and programmes have been seeking to put well-being of the youth at the heart of its operations.

YMCA's focus centers around mainly three areas of concern. They are youth development programmes, health and social responsibility. Through their youth development programmes, YMCAs aim to help children and youth realize their full potential, discover new interests, and build lasting friendships. The fitness facilities and a wide variety of educational programmes and recreational activities further the organization's commitment to a healthy lifestyle for all. Finally, YMCAs are committed to engaging communities to come together and give back, especially to the needy and deprived. Social services, training and counseling surely deserve special mention.

YMCA has been, and remains to this day, a major influence in the shaping of outstanding leaders in our national and international communities. Through its uncompromising commitment to its principles and core values---which include care, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith YMCA has been striving a lot to identify leadership that mobilizes the forces of righteousness and selflessness.

I would urge upon the delegates to work hard to create and nurture a culture of service that does not thrive in just slogans but is measured by its output, not just its pious declarations of principles or objectives but fostering leadership to lead from the front.

This Regional Conference is meaningful in various ways. In this conference, which is being attended by delegates comprising of youth, women and senior leaders of YMCA movement in India, I see the aspirations of youth of our country. I am sure that all of you take pride and inspiration from what the YMCA has been doing not only in Eastern India Region but elsewhere in the country and the world. I am confident that you will all benefit from the deliberations, gain valued knowledge by sharing of experience and at the end leave with a much better understanding and valuable insight and ideas on how you might like to improve ways to reach out to people in your region.

It is often said that what we do today, we do for future generations. I urge upon the delegates to further renew the strong commitment they have to empower young people and especially the marginalized young men and women who are suffering in many corners and oppressed in their thoughts and feelings and opportunity to act. The regional body must look ahead and consider promoting and expanding ambitious youth programmes in a big way.

Finally, I wish very fruitful and productive deliberations over the next two days and also wish you all the very best in your future endeavors and hope that YMCA will continue to strive hard to realise our aspiration of a more harmonious and caring society.

Jai Hind.

Commemoration of International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

I am happy to address you today on this campaign of 'Youth Against Drugs' held in commemoration of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. As you know, it is an UN initiative to strengthen cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse. However, despite continued and increased efforts by the international community, the problem continues to constitute a serious threat to public health, the well-being of humanity, in particular of young people. If we want to make society to be drug free, ladies and gentlemen, the work must begin in right earnest. In fact, more work needs to be done to further strengthen and expand canvas of cooperation and awareness activities.

It is heartening that some leading organisations are working dedicatedly to motivate communities to stay out of the menace of illicit drugs. I understand that students and youth are being involved in its awareness programmes and activities like counseling in educational institutions and rehabilitation centres are being taken up. As part of its week-long activities in commemoration of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking different competitions, street plays, mini marathon were organized to provide a platform for the youth and the community to realize the seriousness of drug addiction. I am told that it has slogans, "More Happiness More Life" and "Aspiration for a Drug Free Nation" highlighting the negative impact of drugs. I am told that the response and interaction has been quite impressive. I congratulate the award winners of different competitions.

Today's programme is a campaign on 'Youth Against Drugs'. Drug abuse has become a social problem because it afflicts the family, the economy and the community. It is an international problem as well. Drugs are envisioned for providing benefits to humanity, but on the other hand its abuses can be a source of complicated social disarray if

left uncontrolled. A lot of research is being done on how addiction to drugs harms people and societies.

Drugs addiction is worrisome. The worst thing about being addicted to drugs is that it affects the youth in a major way. We have seen the impact of drug use in communities and the sheer desperation of parents to rescue their children from this scourge. Peer influence and depression are the major causes and before one knows it, one gets addicted, loses control of self, and ultimately pushes own future into dark.

I would like our youth to stand up against the scourge of drug abuse, which is detrimental to the prospects of our young generation. We should strive to save our fellow youth imprisoned by this vice of drug abuse. The youth have to collectively stand up against it by explaining dangers inherent in abuse of drugs.

Youth, a phase of great emotional turmoil can make or break a person's life, with the right guidance or lack of it. We all have great expectations from our youth who are the future and leaders of tomorrow. We need to nurture youngsters and make them agents of change in their respective communities. Parents, teachers and elders have to encourage, guide and direct this talent and energy to realize its full potential for the individual, society and the nation. We must not forget that the drug addicts need our care and attention. They must be treated delicately because this is the only way to win their heart and put them on the right track.

It is unfortunate that alcohol, tobacco and other potent illegal drugs are easily accessible to youth. The onus lies on exercising personal and collective responsibility to make educational institutions, hostels and shelters of vulnerable youth drug free zones.

I am happy that today's gathering includes many young men and women who are here to say enough-is-enough and for healthy communities without the abuse of drugs and illicit trafficking.

Youth are often instrumental in major flux in civilization and culture in the annals of time. I would like to urge upon students present here today to seek out the many opportunities available to them in

order to serve the community. You can come together to spread the anti-drug abuse message during your co-curricular activities, college events and camps. Continue to develop your own space, find new ways to get youth play their part, and take the lead in showing the community what you stand for. In this way, you will be shaping the community that you live in, in a meaningful way. Let there be a youth movement against drug abuse.

Drugs addiction, undoubtedly, has negative impact on the fabric of the society. The problem of drug addiction is too real and serious to be ignored. It must be eradicated at any cost. Unless serious measures are taken now, the very future of a large chunk of today's youth will be severely compromised. It is now time to be responsible in our actions and take concrete steps that can negate the hold of drugs on society.

We need to involve communities and media in highlighting the perils associated with the drug abuse. Media has a responsibility to focus on such issues with a view to educating people and building a consensus among them to forge a united stand against such scourges. Evils of drug abuse may be included in the educational curriculum of higher educational institutions in order to wean away the gullible youth.

Let this meeting be the beginning of our working together in fighting the menace of drug abuse. I would also like to take this opportunity to appeal for building on the momentum created by this event to host similar consciousness drives for meaningful interactions and community engagements. Let us join hands and share the responsibility to shape the future of our youth and strive to build a society which is free from the scourge of drugs. With these words, I wish the campaign and organizers every success.

Jai Hind.

Centenary Celebration of Shelter Orphanage

I am happy to be here this evening amidst you to participate in the Centenary Celebration of Shelter Orphanage, Cuttack. Reaching a milestone of 100 years is a remarkable achievement and when it is so for an orphanage it speaks a lot. I profusely thank God for giving me this opportunity to visit the orphanage on its 100th year and spend some moments with the inmates.

When I am in the campus of this orphanage on this memorable occasion, I visualize the great mission of human service started a century ago in 1914 that sought a way to make life better for children without families. On this occasion I join others in fondly remembering Rev. John A. D. Khan, Miss Faith E. Stewart and Miss Sonal Mondal, who started this orphanage for girls amid financial hardship and yet with strong faith in God. Ultimately they succeeded and the long journey of orphanage began. I take this opportunity to convey my warm felicitations to the Sisters, Headmistress, Teachers, Staff and inmates of Shelter Orphanage. It is also appropriate to remember the services rendered by those who were associated with the 100 years journey of Shelter Orphanage in different capacities.

It is heartening to learn that right from its inception in 1914 this Shelter Orphanage has been a caring and loving home for destitute, orphaned and unwanted girls. Since 'Ada', the first girl who walked into the orphanage from the jaws of death, hundreds have followed her and passed through the doors of the orphanage. Owing to love, care and concern and provided here when they came out they were transformed as strong individuals both in mind and spirit and held their heads high with dignity and self confidence. I am told that they became teachers, nurses, missionaries and housewives and it is heartening that that they all have embraced the spirit of service in their chosen profession. Even I find that many excelled in sports and games and even one of them became an international athlete.

They all have rewritten their destiny leaving behind the darkness of life they have seen. This is life. If you are down and out nobody will look at you but if you have the courage to stand and make your way amid hardships you will be blessed with success and will be counted for your success. This orphanage, in the last 100 years has saved hundreds of innocent lives in their tender age and has given them love, hope and courage to start life afresh and the society is indeed grateful for this great service.

When I look at the service rendered by Sisters, teachers and others in this orphanage I am reminded of the advice given by the mother of Mahatma Gandhiji to Gandhiji when he was nine years old. She said and I quote, "Son, in your entire life time if you can save someone's life or make it better, your birth as a human being and your life is a success. You have the blessing of the Almighty God".

It is well said, "Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profundity. Kindness in giving creates love." Everyone possesses something of value for others. It could be a kind word, a simple smile, even a helping hand or a bit of support during a difficult emotional time.

Our life is like a river of energy, continually flowing. What happens when a river stops moving? It gets very muddy and stagnant. A fast flowing stream is full of energy and clarity. The act of true giving is something wonderful and amazing. Believe me; the more you give the happier you feel. This is certainly the way to enrich one's life.

So we may strive to help those who are neglected and rejected by the selfish persons and evil forces who try to perpetuate senseless social customs and superstitions. Whenever you have time go to an orphanage, meet those innocent children, spend time with them and give them your love, affection and care. You will find that your life will be filled with love, happiness and compassion for others. We need the help of community to assist the orphanages with their duties. This will serve dual purpose; one- the children will get much love, affection, the right care and second- more and more lovers of the mankind will come forward.

Children are beautiful creation of God and they are a part of this beautiful universe. Childhood is an important phase in everyone's life. It should be filled with fun, enjoyment and love. Children deserve love, affection and proper care by every section of the society. Any deprivation in this stage will result in a great loss to child as well as to the society. We should not make any distinction between a boy and a girl, but in practice the plight of girls is just as precarious – it is even worse for orphan girls, inspite of a number of legislations. They are victims of the conventional society. The future of such marginalized girls and young women is grim without a proper home and education. They find themselves un-wanted, rejected, prejudiced against and objects of hatred for no reason of theirs. Human trafficking, begging, rag-picking, strenuous farm labour and other unskilled jobs are the only few options left to them. They are bereft of joy and happiness in their grim world of labour and pain.

The increasing number of such victims is surely a serious concern for the society. Here I see the role for an orphanage to identify and save such children and give them a secure and safe place in the society where they can live life with dignity. We should try to build a conducive atmosphere where solitude and despair are replaced with friendship and love, where the marginalised lot start dreaming and where they get opportunity to study like others.

Educating a girl child is the need of the hour. Girl child education is very important in our society which marches in rapid strides in different directions. Improving girls' education has a clear impact on the health and economic future of young women and it improves the prospects of the entire community and reduces discrimination at home, in society and in workplace. The girl child must forge forward and attain the highest level of education. In this competitive world woman has several roles to play in the society. Many successful examples are surely an inspiration for others.

It is heartening to note that this century old orphanage strongly believes in the saying, "Educate a man, you educate one person, educate a girl, you educate a complete family" and has all along laid

importance on educating girls. I am told that the orphanage, besides providing formal quality education, arranges technical training for the inmates to make them fit for the competitive world. I would like to suggest for making available computer training and other new options of technology for our girls.

Centenary is a time for celebration and is also a time for reflection. For Shelter Orphanage and for me, this celebration is for those forgotten orphans who were abandoned by different circumstances. This prompted me to describe it as Celebrating a Milestone and nurturing tomorrow's leaders.

The happiness and joy I saw in the eyes of our girls when I interacted with them gives me enough inner peace. Dear children, you are very dear to my heart. You should always aspire high in life. Convert your dreams into reality. This you can do only with a spirit of hard work, initiative, confidence and the determination to achieve. Always have the impetus to carry on. Whatever you do have faith in God. God's blessings will always be with you. I wish you all the very best in life.

The humanitarian mission of Shelter Orphanage has empowered a large number of girls with proper education and values in the past. I hope the orphanage continues to provide safe, secure and joyful shelter to its inmates. Amid plenty of love and care it may bring out the best from its inmates and offer all the help they need to be successful in life and become useful citizens of tomorrow. Let the joy and enthusiasm of the centenary celebration drive everyone to take the orphanage to new heights. With these words, I wish Shelter Orphanage many more glorious years in the service of society.

Jai Hind.

Awards Ceremony for Kallola: Short Film Contest on Child Rights

I am delighted to be here this evening for the award presentation ceremony of 'Kallola', a short film contest on the theme ending violence against children which is indeed a laudable endeavour by UNICEF and 'Aaina'. I am happy that among other awards there is a children's jury award where 51 children have selected the best film from their perspective for the Viewer's Choice award.

The concept in having short films to project the fear and pain of violence from the child's perspective and the means to end it is a noble one and the filmmakers have used the big screen to reshape the way we individually and collectively view the issue. I see it as part of our continued support towards protecting child rights. It is also a reflection of the fact that we care for our children, in fact for all the children.I find, the films that were screened today are an emotional portrayal of growing up of children at home or outside with violence. I congratulate all the filmmakers and all who are associated with the making of the films. I view films as an essential component of a national social action campaign to elevate society's knowledge and understanding of childhood violence, to end such violence and help those impacted reach their full potential.

Children face violence everywhere, either in the family circle or outside. People are often seen turning a blind eye to these incidents of violence. Violence against a child is viewed as "one of the most damaging unaddressed human rights violations in the world today." The United Nations Study on Violence against Children analyses violence against children in five settings: the home and family; schools and educational settings; care and justice institutions; the work-place; and the community. The study which was guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasizes children's rights to physical and personal integrity,

and outlines country's obligations to protect them from "all forms of physical or mental violence", including sexual and other forms of exploitation, abduction, armed conflict, and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. It also obliges the State to enact preventive measures and ensure that all child victims of violence receive the support and assistance they require. All children have the right to live free from violence that harms their physical and mental growth. Violence against children is preventable when right attitude and commitment for the cause of children are discernible.

Malala Yousfzai and Kailash Satyarthi have raised the great cause of children and the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize won by the duo is a great recognition to their work. It shows the cause of children matters most to the world and the world leaders realize it. UNICEF provides an inspiration for all the people who work to promote and protect children's rights. It has been working hard to create a world in which every child has a healthy and safe childhood, the opportunity to learn and a voice to speak for themselves. UNICEF even has a programme, 'End violence against children' to protect children from all forms of violence and abuse. Similarly, it is heartening that 'Aaina' is working with the vulnerable sections of society especially children, women, persons with disability and seeks to raise awareness to their rights.

Children have a very special place in our society because of their vulnerability and special needs for their protection. Their rights are not abstract or aspirational. They are grounded firmly in the basic human needs for life, growth and development. They must be protected from neglect, physical abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, and sexual abuse that can occur at any home, or in the schools or communities. Instead of having a fun filled childhood some children are driven to a disturbed childhood which subsequently stunts their growth and wellbeing.

Children are often voiceless in mainstream society. They can not lobby to advocate their cause. The relative powerlessness of

children makes the protection of their rights all the more important. Children with a disability, children experiencing mental ill-health and other deficiencies are entitled to the full protection of their fundamental human rights. We can do a better job of protecting these children's fundamental human rights and their optimal survival and development.

The right to life and growth is one of the most fundamental of all the rights of the child. This right encompasses the obligation of the Government and civil society to create an environment in which all children grow up in a healthy and protected manner, free from fear and want, and develop their personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. I stress on building an environment that builds resilience and conditions that nurture a positive future for each child. We have made Right to Education a fundamental right. We must see universal access to free primary and secondary education and also access to primary health care.

One of the basic objectives of our State is equal rights and opportunities for children. Equal opportunities for girls begin with equal rights to physical security, first and foremost in the home. I would like to see a world in which gender bias and other harmful traditional practices against girl child and children in general no longer exist because parents, families and society no longer support them.

I feel passionately that we need to raise adequate awareness to end all sorts of violence against children. There should be zero tolerance to violence against children and through speaking out against all forms of violence and being supportive of those directly affected we can make a positive difference. I wish more and more people from all walks of life come forward to support and help the cause.

It is certainly a sacrosanct ideal to cherish a world in which every child reaches his / her full potential. It presupposes concrete actions so that we live up to our positive obligation to ensure respect for every child's fundamental human rights. We have a responsibility to children, to ask what actions we must take in order to give every child the best possible chance in life. Let us continue to strive for

creating a world - a world in which every child has a healthy and safe childhood, the opportunity to learn and a voice to speak for themselves. And let us continue to respect, promote and protect the rights of all children. Together we can create an environment in which all children are able to thrive.

With these words, I wish the endeavour of UNICEF and 'Aaina' all success.

Jai Hind.

Closing Ceremony of International Children Festival – 2015

I am delighted to join you all at the Closing Ceremony of the International Children's Festival, organised by National Youth Project, 'Antarbharati' and BJB English Medium School, Bhubaneswar. Here I am driven down the memory lane to my days as Governor of Goa when I spoke to children in a previous edition of this Children's Festival. I still cherish those fond memories as it is always a special pleasure for me to speak and interact with children. Today I am happy to extend my heartiest greetings to all the children who have come from different parts of the country and our neighbouring countries to participate in this wonderful Festival.

Before addressing the little ones, I would like to thank and acknowledge the tireless efforts of the eminent Gandhian Dr. S.N. Subba Rao, and his entire team from National Youth Project. The Trust has been rendering yeoman service to the younger generations by conducting numerous workshops, camps and festivals, wherein thousands of children and youth have gained knowledge and insights into the rich heritage of our art, culture, language, literature, customs and traditions. The investment it is making on children and youth to direct their energy for nation building activities is indeed precious and laudable.

Children are the most valuable resource and our best hope for the future. I believe that every child deserves an opportunity for a bright future. They are priceless treasures and gifts from God, and as such, it is our conviction that the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs of children should be amply and competently met. We must consider the care of the little ones God entrusts us as a very important responsibility indeed and strive hard to rise upto the occasion.

It is true that children begin their lives with a remarkable genetic inheritance. But their lives are moulded by a multitude of other factors, not least of which is the power of the culture into which they

are born. Cultural influences are very strong and work through numerous ways on a child's pshye at an impressionable age.

Understanding cultures helps children nurture meaningful relationships in classrooms and playgrounds. When they grow up exposed to diverse cultures, people and places, they become much more open to exploring broader possibilities in careers, relationships and decision-making. Without ignorance and prejudices inhibiting them, they can be prepared for the trials and tribulations of life.

Indian Culture is unique and it is one of the oldest cultures of the world. Every aspect of Indian Culture is distinctive. Whether it is life style or language, dress or food everything is inimitable. It is very necessary to make our children aware of this rich Indian culture at an early age so that they imbibe and respect it.

India is truly incredible. A grand synthesis of cultures, traditions, religions and languages of people belonging to different castes and communities has upheld India's unity and cohesiveness.Living with diversity, finding unity in diversity has been one of the great characteristic of our nation. 'Basudhaiva Kutumbakam', the whole world is our family is the cardinal faith of our culture and it binds people of all differences together in one bond of humanity and with lots of love and feeling of brotherhood. Our true identity is that we are Indians and we love and care for the entire universe. This faith has become our source of strength and wealth and foundation of strong and prosperous India. It is also the way to progress in the present and future. It is our responsibility to retain its unique feature and propagate it in every sphere.

It is heartening to see here children forge a link with their culture and tradition. It gives them a chance to know well their roots, and it helps them to develop a multi-dimensional personality, enabling and empowering them to lead by examples. Festivals like this are ideal to develop self-esteem and self-confidence in children and also to inculcate a sense of belonging, the spirit to work together, and foster love and respect for each other. As tomorrow's leaders, the children

must have a broad vision of humanity and through them a strong foundation for a peaceful and joyous world order can be laid.

Children, being quick learners, absorb everything. A child is extremely sensitive to the environments they live in. Fulfilment of the child's urges need to be encouraged and this kind of festival help exploring their hidden potentials and capabilities. That is where elders and organisations like the organisers here have a role to play to encourage children to take initiative and deliver quality results. Children need to be given full freedom to express their emotions and creativity. We must encourage children to fulfil their creative urges.

Dear children, you must always remember that it is the desire within you for realisation of your dreams that will lead you taste success. The path may not always be smooth but never ever lose hope. Never give up or fear rejection. Tell your mind that you can do it and trust me you would be able to do so. Your mind can do wonders for you provided that you conduct your personal and scholastic life in a manner that will bring credit to yourself, your family and your society at all times.

We have the responsibility of handing over our cultural values to the present generation to keep the rich customs and traditions alive through various cultural activities like youth camps and children's festivals. Holding this children's festival year after year is truly commendable. My best wishes to the National Youth Project and 'Antarbharati' for all their endeavours towards promoting peace, harmony, national unity and integrity. I also congratulate the host school for successfully holding this prestigious event and introducing a very good concept where each student takes care of each participant throughout their stay in the festival.

The festival has showcased various cultures and provided a platform to children to exhibit their creative talents and skills and enable them to develop friendship among each other. Looking at the radiant faces of children, it is quite evident that they had enjoyed every moment of their stay and activities in this festival. The efforts made here in this children's festival have touched them and these will

immensely help in transforming their future. As you are ready to leave for your homes and depart from your new friends and this wonderful State, your hearts must be heavy but in this age of Internet and Smartphone distance is no longer a problem and you can be in touch with each other at any time. I hope you will take many memorable and pleasant experiences from here to share with your family and friends. This will pave way to further strengthening our national unity and integrity.

With these words, I wish all our children to always feel proud of their motherland and of the rich and varied heritage of India's culture and tradition. I wish you excellence in whatever you do and a very bright future.

Jai Hind.

Annual State Level Governor's Trophy, 2016

I am delighted to give away the Governor's Trophies and prizes to the winners of the State level Talent Search competition conducted by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi in collaboration with the Department of Culture. I thank the organisers and also the district administration for successfully conducting yet another competition for the Governor's Trophy at the block, district and finally at the state level in junior and senior categories. It is heartening to see the interest and response from school children for the Governor's Trophy which is visible from their enthusiastic participation and this also contributes to the popularity of this endeavour. Governor's Trophy has laudable objective of bringing into light hidden talents from the grassroots level and it aims at preservation and promotion of Odisha's diverse art and culture through these budding talents who may be Odisha's cultural envoys to the world.

One is justifiably proud of Odisha which is a land of a rich and varied heritage of music, dance, drama and fine art. The competition conducted in various events such as Odissi dance and songs, folk dance and songs, Odissi vocal and fine art is a fine example of exhibition of children's positive and artistic values. It is heartening to find students from different backgrounds coming together to celebrate State's cultural diversity.

Whether it is our little dancers who displayed intricate footwork and movements or the tiny hands of child artists who stole the attraction with their fine creation of art or the young singers who enthral with their melodious voice they all have been exceptional and promise a lot. I believe that each performance or creation is an exception in its own way. I am sure the viewers must have had a great time watching them. The heads of schools, the teachers and the parents who have taken care of the children have done an amazing job and I would like to congratulate them for that.

Through performing arts or fine art our endeavour is to encourage and promote our cultural heritage. Competitions like this help to develop self-confidence in children and provide them a bigger platform and much needed exposure. As tomorrow's leaders in art and culture, the children should have a broad vision of their fascinating art and culture and through them a strong foundation for a peaceful world order can be laid. Thus it is essential that all children have access to cultural and artistic knowledge and experience besides mainstream education. In this noble endeavour, educational institutions have to necessarily play a pro-active role.

Not every artistic product will be perfect. Interestingly, it may be the effort put into creating it that matters more in the end. In each of the arts, there are skills that need to be developed and embraced. Not every child may be artistically gifted, but with training and practice, every child can develop artistic skills.

Talent search endeavours bring a platform where one can showcase his/her talent. In fact, today there are so many television shows that help to spot fresh talent in a variety of domains including acting, singing, and dancing. These shows of course open doors of opportunity to a number of unnoticed talents.

In the midst of all these, I feel that children should be taught how to deal with failure beforehand. Parents should not pressurize children just for fame or star-status. Children should have a strong support system in case of failure.

The real point is that a parent's focus should be on the exploration or the journey rather than thinking about the destination or where their child's interest might lead. Here I would like to advise the parents to expose their child to a wide variety of arts and cultural activities by participating in competitions and attending plays and exhibitions.

Apart from talent search competitions parents put too much pressure on their children in matters related to academics and other extra-curricular activities as well. They have too much expectation from their children. They should also be realistic and keep in mind the

physical and mental capabilities of the child. They must remember that it is their support, interest, and encouragement that underscore the importance of their children's work and viewpoint and would further illuminates the way for them.

Dear children, you have been here representing your schools and districts and you were all impressive with your creations. It was amazing to note the precision with which you performed your events. I would like to congratulate you for your wonderful performances. You have been all talented and I am very proud of you. To the winners of this year, I extend my hearty congratulations. They are distinguished by the quality of their performances and their creative spirit. But those who couldn't make it this time should not get disheartened. They must take it as a challenge and do everything right next time to become successful. I wish you all the very best. I also extend my heartiest felicitations to all the children around the State who have participated in different levels in this competition. I wish all of them excellence and a very bright future.

Once again I would like to extend my congratulations to the organisers, for this beautiful event that brings together children from all over Odisha. My best wishes to the Sangeet Natak Akademi and Lalit Kala Akademi in all their commendable endeavours towards promoting art and culture. I strongly encourage this initiative and wish that this would continue to be an ideal platform for children to showcase their artistic and creative values.

Jai Hind.

Valedictory Function of World Junior Chess Championship

I am delighted to be here this evening for the valedictory function of the 2016 FIDE World Junior Chess Championship for Boys and Girls under 20 years of age. At the outset, I would like to offer my hearty congratulations to the winners, other medal winners and indeed to all the players for their excellent performances during the Championship. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to the organisers, the KIIT University and All Odisha Chess Association who have worked hard for organising this event on such a successful note. We are happy and proud that KIIT University which has successfully organised Grandmaster Championships a number of times in the past hosted this important championship for the world junior chess crown and in doing so it has reiterated its commitment to the promotion of sports and games in the state.

The sports lovers of the State deserve congratulation for their enthusiastic presence and great support to players throughout the Championship. I am told that chess fans from all over the world have followed the whole event live on Internet. I am certain that the honest and fierce struggle and the wonderful game the players have played must have met the expectations of fans across the globe.

It is heartening to note that the 15 day long Championship demonstrated the integral competitive strength of players from different countries to achieve global supremacy. It witnessed many promising players who would be the potential world champions in future. They spared no effort to play hard with their wits and courage. They displayed good sportsmanship and excellent skills. They produced many good games which chess fans learned and admired. The Championship was successful in the sense that the participating players get to learn from each other. This is a good opportunity for them to communicate and strengthen their friendship. I believe that the 2016 World Junior Chess Championship must have left good memories in the hearts of players, officials and organisers.

The world Chess Body, FIDE has chosen Bhubaneswar, Odisha as the venue for the World Junior Chess Championship. I am told that this is the first time in Eastern India; Odisha is hosting this prestigious championship. Odisha is fast emerging as a potential venue for world championships and international sporting events with world class sports facilities and infrastructure. The State Government is providing all possible encouragement and support to host world class sporting events in the State and it is a delight for the sports lovers of Odisha.

We, in our country have a special love and following for chess. We have many players taking this sport seriously, while the number of those who like to spend their free time over a game of chess runs into millions. We have a lineage of brilliant players who brought laurels to the country with their achievements. The elite list of Indians who won World Junior Chess Crowns earlier include Viswanathan Anand who himself is also a former World Men's Chess Champion,P. Harikrishna, Abhijeet Gupta and Koneru Humpy and we have also other medal winners at this prestigious event. Odisha has also many promising and talented chess players. I hope that the entire Championship played to decide the World Junior Chess Champion has definitely served to further develop chess in Odisha and the world at large.

I am told that the winners in every category, apart from the titles are conferred the title of Grandmaster (GM) and Woman Grandmaster (WGM) respectively and they automatically qualify for the forthcoming World Cup, which is part of the World Championship Cycle. There are also International Master and Women International Master norms for players performing creditably. This Championship must have provided our players an ideal platform to take their game to the next level. I wish all of them best of luck and more success in future. At the same time I sincerely hope that each of them can become a promoter of chess sport and a messenger for chess culture.

With these words, I once again express my happiness to be in your midst this evening. Thank you.

Jai Hind.

DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Inauguration of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) International Trade Fair

At the outset, I wish you all a very prosperous and happy New Year 2014. Today I am happy to join you at the inauguration of the second edition of Odisha MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise) International Trade Fair. I would like to congratulate the MSME Department which is organizing such a mega event jointly with National Small Industries Corporation Limited (NSIC) for their committed efforts for the sustained development of this important segment of our economy. I am given to understand that there are around 250 stalls in this Trade Fair which is having participation from all over Odisha and India.

In recent years trade fairs, conferences, business events, economic forums and exhibitions have become very effective platforms for conducting business on a national and international scale. They provide an excellent opportunity to assess views from clients and determine market potential, conduct research and evaluate competition, develop commercial structures by identifying new agents and distributors, and initiating joint ventures, tie ups, project partnerships and also help in boosting investment prospects. Exhibitions help in promotion, marketing and publicity efforts of participating enterprises especially MSMEs to a great extent as the micro and small enterprises find it difficult to give adequate publicity to their products in media due to financial constraints. Such events also act as a platform for all the potential buyers wherein they have an access to entire gamut of products and technologies. The tools of the exhibition like live demonstration, product launches, touch and feel of the product, networking opportunities, etc., all further foster sales. In view of the importance of Exhibitions and Trade fairs the effort of MSME Department to organize such an event jointly with NSIC is praiseworthy.

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India have evolved considerably since independence. From being referred

to merely as the Small Scale Industries (SSI) sector in the 1960s and 1970s, the MSME sector has progressed in scale and in the scope of business activities over the years. While a key achievement of MSMEs over time has been their talent in utilising available domestic resources to deliver quality products and services, these have made their presence felt across sectors - manufacturing, trade and services, as well as in prominent export markets. They have made an impact on a range of issues, from industrial progress to entrepreneurship and from job creation to economic empowerment. MSME sector is an important pillar of Indian economy as it contributes greatly to the growth of Indian economy with a vast network of over 25 million enterprises, creating employment of about 70 million, manufacturing more than 6000 products ranging from traditional to high-tech items, contributing about 45% to manufacturing output and about 40% of exports, directly and indirectly. This imparts to this sector an important role in the national endeavour for growth with equity and inclusion.

MSME sector in India is highly heterogeneous in terms of the size of the enterprises, variety of products and services produced and the levels of technology employed. It is complementary to large industries as ancillary units. It is considered the largest source of employment after the agriculture sector in the country. The distinct feature is that many workers from the vulnerable and marginalized sectors of society, as well as a large number of women workers are engaged in MSMEs. Government is keen on the development and growth of MSME sector and policy initiatives like enactment of the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006, to increase their flow of credit to the SME sector, are all initiatives towards boosting entrepreneurship, investment and growth. Our effort is to promote growth and development of globally competitive Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, including Khadi, Village and Coir industries, in cooperation with all stakeholders by providing support to existing enterprises and encouraging creation of new enterprises.

Entrepreneurship is another vital part which is not only about setting up one's own enterprises but also giving employment to many people, thereby contributing significantly to the growth and development of the country. Considering constraints at the Government level on providing jobs to all, self employment must be promoted. Instead of job seekers one should be encouraged to become job providers. It is strongly believed that the MSME sector is the nursery of entrepreneurship., often driven by individual creativity and innovation. I therefore encourage MSMEs to look at themselves as not only producers, but also innovators. The MSME sector is characterized by low investment requirement, operational flexibility and location wise mobility. So people should be encouraged to come up with their entrepreneurial initiative. It is heartening that National Small Industries Corporation Limited (NSIC) is engaged in promoting small and budding entrepreneurs. It is quite admirable that during this Trade Fair massive technology demonstration has been attempted to encourage youth to become self employed. It is heartening to note that the MSME Department has requested all the Vice-Chancellors of the universities of the State to impress upon the students to take advantage of the technology demonstration.

I believe that technology, marketing, credit and skill development should be major areas of focus for a sustainable and a stronger growth of the MSME sector. The MSMEs, especially of the traditional sector are not cost effective, which escalates the price of their products facing stiff competition from other sectors. Therefore, efforts have to be made for cost effective technologies. We must concentrate on R & D (Research & Development) to evolve modern production infrastructure, and also making them technologically competent to meet increasing levels of domestic and global competition arise from economic liberalization and market reforms. With improving skills, better coordination with bigger firms and greater technological access, MSMEs in India are sure to move into

a higher trajectory of success keeping pace with the global developments.

In a highly competitive environment, finance is needed not only for running an enterprise and operational requirements but also for modernization / upgradation of technology, capacity expansion and marketing etc. Inadequate access to finances is the root cause of poor technological and marketing performance of MSMEs and their downslide. Considering the importance of adequate, timely and affordable credit, the PM's Task Force on MSMEs has decided that there should be an annual growth in the number of micro enterprise accounts which be for the present fixed at 10% for banks to achieve. Though there has been an increase in credit of this sector, still the recommendations of PM's Task Force are yet to be achieved. I therefore, urge upon banks to give special attention to financing the Micro and Small Entrepreneurs.

Regarding Odisha, I am told that there are about 1.5 million MSMEs providing employment to about 3.3 million people. One of the important aspects of the MSMEs is that 74 percent of them are located in rural areas. This sector, therefore, has the capacity to generate economic activity in rural areas, by using local raw materials, local skills and providing people employment close to where they live. I always believe that our rural economy must not be isolated, but rather integrated with other sectors of the economy, for bringing rural prosperity in Odisha. MSMEs can play a very important role in this regard. I call upon MSMEs to become that vital link between our rural economy and our industrial sector, so that through forward and backward linkages, the benefits of growth flow widely and deeply in our State.

The MSME landscape has matured over time and moved up the value chain. However, to empower the MSME sector and further consolidate its rightful place as the growth engine of Indian economy, it is necessary to support the MSMEs, educate and empower them to make optimum utilization of the resources, both

human and economic, to achieve success. Such trade promotional activities will be of great advantage.

In the end, I would like to emphasize that all stakeholders must work together for promotion and development of this important segment of our economy. I wish the second Odisha MSME International Trade Fair a great success.

Jai Hind.

34th Foundation Day Function of NALCO

It gives me immense pleasure to be with you all on this occasion of the 34th Foundation Day of National Aluminium Company widely known as NALCO. It is an occasion to appreciate the valuable partnership provided by NALCO in India's industrial development. I take this opportunity to extend my good wishes to all those who have been associated with the remarkable journey of NALCO for over three decades.

Foundation day provides us to cheer about your achievements and progress and at the same time it is also an occasion to take stock of your endeavours and achievements, foresee the immediate challenges, plan accordingly and reiterate your commitment to further strengthen the organisation. On occasion such as this, we should review and assess how far we have been able to play the expected role.

The emergence of National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) after it was set up following technical collaboration agreement with Aluminium Pechiney of France in 1981 has led to a quantum jump in alumina and aluminium production in the country. NALCO is by far the first Public Sector Company in the country to venture into international market in a big way. It has grown and is now identified as one of the lowest cost producers of alumina and aluminium in the world. Its alumina and metal enjoy prominence in world market on account of quality and international standard. Due to its consistent track record in managing operations and improving costs and output, NALCO has been accorded the prestigious "Navratna" status by Government of India in 2008.

I am briefed that the production units at NALCO are operating consistently near or more than 100% capacity. The company has performed well on financial front with regular profits and serving shareholders with good dividends as well. The success of any organization depends on the efficiency of the people manning it. It has

been well said, "After all, the success of an institution depends not so much on the rules and regulations that are made, though of course, rules and regulations are necessary, but on the integrity, efficiency, honesty of purpose of those persons that work". I appreciate the support and co-operation of all the employees of NALCO in achieving success for the company and hope that they will uphold the faith reposed in them and maintain the high traditions of the NALCO.

It is heartening to note that besides achieving excellence in production, NALCO has been equally outstanding in its role as a responsible corporate entity. By extending relief measures to the victims of the cyclone Phailin, NALCO has again stood with the victims of natural calamities in Odisha. This deserves commendation.

I am further aware that NALCO, right from its inception has been laying special emphasis on peripheral developments and also on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). In order to strengthen its CSR activities, it has set up Nalco Foundation. The Foundation, I am told, has taken up some significant projects in health, education, drinking water and other areas of community development. I am pleased to note that in recognition of its CSR initiatives, Nalco has received the PSE Excellence Award, in the Maharatna and Navratna category, for Corporate Social Responsibility and Responsiveness, instituted by the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), Government of India and Indian Chamber of Commerce. They have set an example for others both public as well as private sector counterparts.

Another notable achievement of NALCO is its concern and efforts in taking care of surrounding environment, nature and people. For its care for ecology and environment, it has received several coveted awards like "Indira Priyadarshini Vrikshamitra Award" and "Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar" and the latest is the 'Gem Granites Environment Award' for the year 2012-13, given by Federation of Indian Mineral Industries (FIMI).

However, I still believe that the company could perform better in some other areas like expanding capacities, exploiting business opportunities in sectors of mining and metals, diversification, and

technology updation. I am confident that with introspection, the company would move forward with a fresh determination to seize opportunities, harnessing its strength and resources.

The public sector has been playing an important role in the Indian economy after Independence. The Industrial Policy Resolutions of 1948 and 1956 underlines public sector as the core of our development programme. The 1956 policy is instrumental in assigning a leadership position to the public sector. Here I can say that the Constitution of India has guided our approach to public sector. One of the Directive Principles of State Policy says and I quote: "the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good" (unquote).

The public sector has contributed to our industrial growth enormously, operating across critical sectors such as mining, steel, basic and heavy machinery and infrastructure. In an economy that had to be built up virtually from scratch, our industries have transformed in a big way and have developed the capacity to create complex and diversified range of products. The public sector has become the driving force to bring India into the group of manufacturing nations and it is nice to see our PSEs and PSUs have emerged as global companies. On the domestic front they have emerged as major employers, providing livelihood to millions of people.

Economic advancement led to an increasing presence of the private corporate sector but it is true that our economy has the space and the need for co-existence of both the public and the private sectors. The country needs a strong public sector to complement the efforts of the private industry.

Managerial and commercial autonomy has been devolved on the profit-making central sector PSEs and PSUs through the scheme of Maharatnas, Navratnas and Miniratnas. There are seven Maharatnas, fourteen Navratnas and seventy two Miniratnas today. These measures, by providing the operational flexibility to respond quickly to market, have led to an improvement in their performance. However, the pressures of liberalization and globalization imply that we cannot rest

on our laurels. Much more needs to be done to provide a level playing field between the public and private sectors in terms of flexibility of operation and quicker decision-making.

As vital members of a thriving industry sector, PSEs and PSUs must drive overall industrial and economic growth. I am happy that NALCO is regarded as one of the successful examples of PSUs in our country both in productivity and quality. To my mind, the foremost challenge today is to increase the competitiveness to deal with market forces. Management has to be of the highest professional level, enabling the attainment of global benchmarks in productivity and efficiency. Management of human resources, including dealing with the existing skill gap as well as forecasting and preparing for skills required in the future, have to be given priority.

Industrial growth calls for high priority in technology development and innovation. In a nation's progress deposits of natural resources is crucial. But deficiency of natural resources does not close the gates of prosperity. The development status of a nation is judged by its technological prowess. We have instances of smaller nations who have developed on the strength of technology. We have to take advantage of our knowledge infrastructure and exploit it properly to develop growth-inducing technology. We have to make a choice of technologies for development based on socio-economic, environmental and security factors, and on availability of resource and infrastructure. I call upon our scientists and engineers to provide technology foresight.

Indian PSEs and PSUs have been an integral part of the industrial landscape of our country. As model employers and as leaders of the industrial community, they have contributed in many ways. However, there is no time for complacency. We must keep pace with the fast changing world. Otherwise, I am afraid, we will become redundant. Continuity with change has been the defining feature of today's success. Developing new products and processes, entering new markets, and addressing new consumers should be on their business

strategy to succeed in the globalised market. Here, I would like that NALCO would consider taking appropriate and right steps.

I am given to understand that NALCO has adopted the new Corporate Plan and Vision 2020 since 2009-10. Pursuing the Vision Statement of becoming a "Reputed Global Company in the Metals and Energy Sectors", the company has already initiated actions, encompassing the whole gamut of business activities, for achieving the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan. I am confident that NALCO will grow in strength and meet the expectations of the nation. I believe that NALCO will undertake many initiatives in future to take forward its growth story and foster the development of the nation I wish NALCO all success in its future endeavours.

Jai Hind.

Valedictory Session of Consultative Workshop on Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for Leadership

I am happy to be present in the concluding session of the day long consultative workshop on "Needs assessment and Strategic Planning for Leadership" in RUSA being organized by Tata Institute of Social Sciences in association with Department of Higher Education, Government of Odisha. What is satisfying is that we have a forum like this to express our views. I appreciate the opportunity and also appreciate the opportunity to be with you today. I am sure the preceding sessions must have witnessed intense interactions and fruitful deliberations on these vital issues with good feedbacks and I am looking forward with great interest to go through the report of the consultation.

Here I would like to raise few pertinent issues and I do so with utmost concern before this august gathering of Vice-chancellors, senior university officials, Principals of colleges, teachers and Government officials. Graduating more students is a key goal of our education system as we work to help the state and the country prosper but quality can never be compromised with quantity. We are aware that vigorous debate is going on improving quality in the university and our higher education system to nurture and develop universities and colleges and elevate them to the standards of their counterparts in other countries as we find we have no university or institution in top 200 universities in the world and even smaller countries have centres of excellence matching international standard.

As the Chancellor of the universities in the state, I am very keen about this consultative workshop that deals with two very vital aspects. The mission of the Chancellor's Office is to serve the university system of the state by providing leadership in higher education. I am determined to promote a statewide perspective on higher education that attends to the current and developing needs of the

state, to further and achieve the vision for the university system by providing leadership in analyzing, monitoring, and anticipating higher education trends and developments, and by planning strategically for the future of the university system and making our universities attain recognition worldwide. For this to happen we are contemplating to introduce reforms. Plan properly and develop an effective and positive approach.

Let us think that why planning is so important and why it must be done with a strategy? From a macro perspective, education today gets done in a global marketplace. Change is occurring at an unprecedented pace. Time and distance continue to become less and less relevant thanks in great part to the explosive growth of technology and the Internet. At a micro view, strategic planning provides purpose and direction. How are you going to get somewhere if you don't know where you are going? Everyone in the system needs to know what you do, what are your priorities, and how you compete. Without strategic planning, our education system will simply drift, and will succumb to the pressure of the day. It requires education leaders like business leaders to accept that yesterday's success does not ensure success in the future. It requires challenging the status quo, changing behaviors, implementing new procedures, hiring different people, and putting new systems in place in order to deliver on the strategy. There is every possibility of having exponentially higher rates of failure than unless we plan and implement well. We must create vision and promote values.

I understand that the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched its ambitious programme to revamp the higher education sector in the country, Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA). A centrally sponsored scheme, RUSA seeks to provide strategic support and funding to state universities and colleges for quality improvement and infrastructure upgradation. Through RUSA it is aimed to cover 316 states public universities and 13,024 colleges across the country. Odisha is already part of this flagship programme. Under the RUSA, states have been told to conduct

baselines surveys and prepare state perspective plans. It is to be ensured that RUSA delivers in a time bound manner. Tata Institute of Social Sciences and RUSA are working hard planning for the future and revamping Indian higher education in general and they concentrate on capacity building and leadership development under their programme 'Need Assessment and Strategic Planning for RUSA'.

In India, we have three broad categories of the higher education institutions, centrally funded institutions, state funded institutions and private institutions. About 94 per cent of the students enrolled in state funded or state controlled private institutions come under the state higher education system. So, any effort for development in this sector must recognize the importance of state higher education institutions and strive to improve their status.

We must develop appropriate vision and planning for the development of institutions and the higher education sector at the state level. Given the complexities of managing the access and equity issues within and amongst states as well as the large number of institutions that already come under the state university system, there is a crying need for cohesive and integrated planning in higher education focusing on the state as the basic unit.

We have seen how several factors have been responsible in reducing universities to an administrative and examination conducting unit rather than an institution focused on promoting teaching, research and faculty development of associated colleges. We must allow room for creativity in teaching, learning, curriculum development or research.

I strongly believe that without bringing reforms whether in governance or other aspects pertaining to quality in the system, it will not be possible to unleash the potential of the state universities. The reforms initiated under RUSA, I am sure, will build a self-sustaining momentum that will push for greater accountability and autonomy of state institutions and impress upon them the need to improve the quality of education.

The whole reform process begins with a needs assessment. It helps us to develop an action plan describing strengths, challenges, and recommended strategies for improvement in educational practices and programs with education research in higher education by making a comparison with the best practices of successful institutions. The needs assessment cannot be done in isolation rather in collaboration with education leaders, faculty, students, and community partners to identify assets, potential barriers to greatness, and opportunities for significant improvement. I am of the view that instead of going for unplanned expansion, our effort should always be on consolidating and developing the existing system adding capacities. I am told that based on the needs assessment, RUSA will provide all assistance in the development of a comprchensive strategic plan for an institution. Strategic planning is now a requirement not just to survive but to empower and establish leadership.

The strategic planning process empowers higher education leadership teams to build broad-based support for priority goals and to develop an Action Plan for continuous improvement in higher education. The process also helps leadership teams understand the changing dynamics of learning to support 21st Century Learners and the components of excellence as methods to measure success and to build the capacity to have a robust higher education system. While going for strategic planning it is essential to concentrate more on Improving the quality of existing state institutions by conformity to prescribed norms and standards and adoption of accreditation as a mandatory quality assurance framework, improving governance in institutions, promoting research and innovation by elevating existing universities into research universities, ensuring adequate availability of quality faculty in all higher educational institutions, improving equity in higher education by providing adequate opportunities to socially deprived communities to cite a few only.

It is heartening to note that RUSA document lays great emphasis on these aspects and also on improvement of the quality of teaching-learning processes in order to produce employable and

competitive graduates, post-graduates and PhDs. Leaders in higher education must be looking ahead, anticipating change, and developing a strategy to proactively and successfully navigate through the turbulence created by change. I understand that a strategic plan can be a daunting task for reasons like time, energy, commitment and lack of experience but I see RUSA to play an important role here.

A good leader helps improved governance and also in strategic and improved resource generation and all ultimately to the quality of institutions. Leadership offers an opportunity to grow professionally. Good leader becomes catalyst for organizational change. We need leaders of purpose and direction and to be mission driven to overcome trying and difficult times with ease. So, developing Higher Education leadership has rightly been made a core RUSA priority which also attributes to its success largely. Here I would like 3 types of leadership- faculty, research, and administrative. We must know that the best plans and ideas without great execution are just plans or ideas. It is the leaders with foresight, vision will help executing plans and ideas with perfection to deliver desired results.

Our aim is to build a strong and vibrant public higher education system into the balance of the 21st century. Our responsibility and great privilege is to work together to form a strong system and make it even better. That is a challenge that I and other stakeholders in the higher education system must embrace. As we pursue this challenge, our foundational theme is creating a more educated Odisha and India. To create it, I propose three broad areas of focus.

First is performance. We must continually evaluate not only what we do, but also how well we do it. Our performance going forward will not be judged solely by growth as measured by enrolment and new buildings. Retention, progression, and graduation – remains relevant and timely. Secondly, no longer will higher education be immune from answering questions of effectiveness and efficiency. As a public agency we are accountable; we are expected to deliver service in the most efficient and effective way.

There is an old adage, your parents give you life, but education prepares you to live. A college curriculum should not be solely focused on training a person for a first job, as important as that is. Of equal value is the role of college in shaping someone to live a productive life, no matter what the career path he or she chooses. The people of Odisha and India must have faith in our ability to deliver a world-class graduate, equipped with the knowledge, and just as critically, the values, needed to be successful in a very competitive and global world. This trust demands that we do it right and we will do it right with proper assessment and strategic planning for leadership and RUSA will be of great advantage and strength in meeting the objectives.

With these words, I wish the endeavour all success as we march toward perfection in this great and noble task.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of State Level Agriculture Fair (Krushi Mahostav – 2016)

I am happy to be with you this evening for the inauguration of the State Level Agriculture Fair (Krushi Mahotsav). I understand that the department is regularly organising agriculture fairs at the district, zonal and state level. Of course, Krushi Mahotsav initiatives, dedicated to farmers, help in disseminating knowledge of newer technologies in agriculture, animal husbandry, dairy and other allied areas and this is also making significant impact to bring a qualitative difference in the lives of the farmers.

Odisha has been doing reasonably well in overall food grains production in the country and it has been adjudged as the best performing State having won the prestigious Krishi Karman Award for the fourth time in the last five years since the institution of the award in 2010-11 by the Union Ministry of Agriculture. I am told that in 2014-15, Odisha produced an all time high 118.24 lakh metric tonne of food grains against 96 lakh metric tonne in 2013-14. It is a commendable achievement and it recognises the efforts and the commitment of the State for development of agriculture and also the efforts of our hard working farmers. While congratulating on the achievement I am sure that the spirit and good work will continue to scale new heights in future.

Odisha's economy is primarily an agrarian economy. Here agriculture remains life and livelihood for more than 70 percent of total population. Horticulture also plays an important role in the agrarian life of the people of Odisha. However, our agricultural production system is often adversely affected by vagaries of monsoon and natural disasters. The erratic distribution of rainfall in the last Kharif resulted in severe drought in the western tracts of the State pushing farmers to distress. This calls for immediate attention to protect the farmers' interest and provide them adequate technological support.

Now-a-days more than ever, agriculture faces a tough challenge. It is the most traditional of all productive activities and it has been through many evolutions and technological transformations over time. Nevertheless, we have to re-think the strategy and adapt to a world that is fast changing. Of late, a new form of agriculture has captured the attention of the international community and takes the name of "Climate Smart Agriculture: Agriculture in harmony with the climate and environment." We have to examine its relevance in the context of our State and Nation.

Because of increasing population the availability of natural resources to the teeming millions become scarce. Frequent climate change and inadequate rainfall negatively influence many agricultural productive systems especially in the most vulnerable and poor areas.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to transform agricultural production processes in a more sustainable way, allocating resources correctly and appropriately, reducing waste throughout all phases of the production chain. It is also important to make all productive systems resilient to climate change, thus reducing vulnerability to unforeseen contigencies. At the same time it is very important that agricultural systems should be harnessed to contribute to the wellness of the climate by diminishing greenhouse gases.

So, how can agriculture adapt to the challenges imposed by climate change? It can develop new technologies which explore the cultivation and breeding of non-conventional species that are more adaptable to the ongoing climate change. Such effort to achieve a "climate smart agriculture" requires the involvement of all stakeholders. This is what the participants from different spheres, like policy makers to technocrats, manufacturers to suppliers, service providers and financial institutions invited to the agriculture fair, will talk about and share their experience with the farming community.

As you are aware, the survival and well-being of a Nation depends much on the sustainable development of its natural resources. The available resources and lands shall be suitably managed to meet the social, economical and cultural needs of present and future

generation. This is where the scientist community plays an important role in transforming the Government's policy into reality.

I urge the scientists to explore all the avenues to develop agriculture, since they are directly in contact with the farming community, who "till and toil". The scientists should serve as a "ladder" to them to scale better heights in their economic and social status. We need to increase the irrigation intensity and greater usage of latest scientific techniques in agriculture so as to encourage the farmers to increase the food grain productivity. The problem of population explosion still persists. Solution to this is to maximize production in the land and this can be done through scientific methods. I insist upon farmers to adopt modern agricultural machinery and new technologies for increasing agricultural production and reduce the production cost. I would also advise them to go for processing and value addition for increasing their income. Here I would like to ask the department to work further on skill development in the field of agriculture.

We need to ensure that Krishi Vigyan Kendras are utilised to the transfer of newly-developed technologies to the rural masses, become helpful to increase agricultural production, improve the quality of the produce, so that the socio-economic status of the farming community is improved. Field-level demonstrations, On-Farm Trials, Exhibitions, Kisan Melas, Training on Information and Communication Technology, Exposure visits, etc. are to be given more emphasis.

Organic farming makes the produce healthier. It is important not only to facilitate organic farming but also promote trade of organic commodities through knowledge sharing. The State has substantially advanced in Organic Farming and Soil Health Management. Organic farming and integrated farming are being promoted to facilitate production of quality agricultural produce. Besides, indigenous knowledge and farming practices of the State's tribal people must be recognised for promoting food security and conserving biodiversity.

With potato and onion crisis hogging the headlines almost every year, we must be well prepared to meet the growing demand and

attain self-sufficiency. I urge upon everyone from officials to scientists to aim at producing more from the field and prevent recurring of such kind of situation. I am told that Onion bulbs produced in Odisha are better than those coming from Nasik, but as there is no proper stocking mechanism major part of the production is going outside the state. The State is thus compelled to import the crop from other states. Therefore, serious thought should be given to improve storage facilities.

In Odisha, several horticultural crops are grown on a commercial scale and provide livelihood to many farmers in the State. With geographical diversity, different agro-climate zones and varied soil types the State is better placed for production of various horticultural crops. There is a need to reorient our research programmes to meet these challenges and upgrade our technologies for storage, processing, handling and export of horticultural produce to meet the international standards.

The livestock sector is evolving in response to rapidly increasing demand for livestock products. The prices of meat, milk and cereals are likely to increase in the coming decades. So, implementation of scientific techniques and latest technologies is the main key in upgrading livestock, production and management in rural areas for a prospective future livestock farming. Promoting crossbred and improving genesis of animal and poultry is important. Different public discussions and training programmes should be carried out from time to time for the farmers and extension workers in order to protect and safeguard the livestock sector.

Agriculture products, new farming technologies, tools, animal breeds and achievements of the different agencies have been showcased at the fair. I would like our farmers to visit the exhibits and ask as many questions as possible to the authorities and scientists. With these words, I wish the State Level Agriculture Fair all success and it meets its objectives.

Jai Hind.

Inaugural Session of Agro-Vation

I am delighted to be here for the opening of this unique event titled 'Agro-Vation' signifying innovation in agriculture which is the need of the hour. I congratulate the Indian Chamber of Commerce on this occasion for their thoughtful initiative in organising this event. You have been, and continue to be, a pacesetter in taking a multidisciplinary approach to solve problems, and your endeavour to promote innovation in agriculture deserves commendation.

Science, technologies and innovations become more important as the population rises, with less land available to produce food and declining levels of water. The focus must therefore be on how to produce more food, with less land and water, while conserving the environment.

In the 1960s, the world was under the spell of Malthusian theory, with rising concerns that agricultural growth will not be able to keep up pace with population growth. However, the power of science and technology could break yield barriers. The green revolution, with high yielding varieties of wheat and rice, transformed Asia. India – which a Nobel Prize economist once considered a "basket case" – soon became a major exporter of food.

The backbone of any agricultural revolution is access of farmers to modern agricultural inputs like knowledge and technology. The impact of the agricultural transformation agenda has been huge in Odisha. Odisha has earned laurels at the national level by bagging the fourth 'Krishi Karman Award' in five years for record food grain production and recently, it is conferred with the 9th Global Agriculture Leadership Award 2016 given by Indian Council of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) in the category of Best Agriculture State-2016. This award was given for successfully launching large number of pro-farmer progammes to revitalize agriculture in the State leading to higher growth rate, improved farm income and accelerated pace of overall agriculture development and bringing rural prosperity.

I congratulate the department as well as hard working farmers of the state for the honour bestowed on Odisha.

Ladies and gentlemen, nothing is more important than food. Growing our own food, processing what we produce, becoming competitive in export markets and creating jobs all across our economy are crucial for our national security.

Agriculture is the sector where we have the greatest potential. While our potential is great, we must have expertise and tools to unlock the potential of agriculture. For accelerated growth in the economy, we have embarked upon a major transformation in the agricultural sector. We are doing this through the rapid transformation of key agricultural value chains – from the farm to the table. We are making agriculture a flourishing business.

Our population of 1.21 billion plus makes us a huge market. We must create markets locally for our own farmers. We are working to create ecosystems in which small, medium, and large-scale farming not only co-exist but also flourish. We are focusing on creating value added products from staple crops – through an aggressive import substitution programme and other policy reforms to enhance food production and agricultural resilience.

We are changing the narrative in our horticultural sector. Odisha has great potential in horticulture and our horticulture produces are of good quality. We can encourage consumers and food businesses to buy seasonal fruit and vegetables. By doing this, we can improve the nation's health, help the environment and boost the economy. In order to take advantage of expanding markets and opportunities, I want our farmers and food producers to have access to the widest possible range of technologies. To develop the export market for our fresh produce into outside market, a fresh produce development programme is to be mooted in partnership with the Ministry of Aviation. Building of cargo airports is another consideration to enhance our competitiveness in the export of fresh produce.

Coming to food processing sector, I would say that increased literacy rate, change in lifestyle, and mass media promotion are

amongst the major contributors to the growing demand of processed food in the country. The increasing preference of urban consumers for processed food should be borne in mind.

Indian food processing sector has enormous potential in terms of production, consumption, export and growth prospects. Also, the Government of India has made the commercialization of the country's food processing sector the first priority with various fiscal incentives. So, there is a vast scope for the companies willing to invest in the food processing and packaging sector - a sector that is growing 15%-20% annually.

It has both opportunities and challenges. One of the major challenges before the food processing industry in India, currently, is the lack of proper infrastructure. Only two percent of agricultural produce is estimated to be preserved for processing in India, currently, due to the lack of storage facilities. There are many opportunities for the food processing industry to use technology like nanotechnology. It is upto our scientists to develop a range of applications in the food processing sector. According to many industry experts, Indian food processing industry is a sleeping giant and Government initiatives will definitely encourage the rapid growth in this sector.

Modernisation and digitization of our agricultural sector will harness the required transformation. I understand, we have a large number of technologies available with us, but we face a lot of difficulties in transferring these to farmers' field. Recognising this, our effort must be to provide the farmers access to the latest innovations and technologies. Adequate research, development and extension activities are required for the purpose.

The issue is not really the technology itself – it is available, it is about building the right ecosystem that serves the requirements of agricultural communities. In Odisha we have the second oldest Agricultural University of the Country and I am happy to say it has been dedicatedly engaged to this task and achieved successes.

The Agro-Vation is a multi-stakeholder event. This three day interactive forum organised by Indian Chamber of Commerce, I am

told will examine critical issues concerning agriculture and allied sector. It would highlight and focus on the opportunities as well as the challenges. I believe the event will be the epicentre of driving innovation in agriculture, horticulture and processed food technology. I am sure you will benefit from case studies from technical experts and forge new relationships with potential partners.

The journey to make India a global powerhouse in food is still ongoing. But the results we have achieved in recent years make me confident that we will reach the goal. Agriculture was the sustenance in the past, and in agriculture is embedded our greater future. With these words, I wish 'Agro-Vation-2016' all success.

Jai Hind.

National Seminar on 150th Year of Na-Anka (Great Odisha Famine-1866) and Food Security in Contemporary Odisha

I deem it a great opportunity to be here amid such a distinguished gathering for the commemoration of the 150th year of Na-Anka, the Great Odisha Famine of 1866. The famine of the mid-nineteenth century was a catastrophe which left deep scars on the future of the State and the country. I wish to commend the organisers for their endeavour for introspection of this defining moment in state's history and determination to make food security a top priority. It is this dimension which would transform the process of commemoration into a moral act.

Etched in the historical memory of Odisha is a deep understanding of hunger and lack of farsightedness. Odisha today is determined with the resilience to fight the adversity, overcome the scourge of famine, hunger and food insecurity and provide food security to its people and ensure that no further repetition occurs.

We have several examples of great famines across the globe in Mao's great famine, China's most devastating catastrophe 1958-62 and Great Irish Potato Famine of 1847 to just name a few that led to a devastating impact on the world's poor causing severe food crisis. In our country we have the Great Bengal Famine and Madras Famine. These have undoubtedly been a setback to development.

The Great Odisha Famine in the year 1866 was undoubtedly one of the most significant events in the country's history and also a transforming event. It is a disaster and misfortune. The failure to import sufficient rice during the 1860's, insufficient rainfall, poor food distribution networks and lack of foresight on the part British administration led to a huge amount of suffering and loss of life– the effects of which can still be felt in today's society. The immediate impact of the famine on the population was dramatic as it was unprecedented.

It had also a profound effect on many aspects of state's social and cultural life.

For many decades afterwards the great Odisha famine of 1866 was simply a dark and even humiliating experience which the survivors, and the survivors of the survivors, had little wish to recall. The terrible realities of the past hunger present themselves to us as nightmare images. Are we to negotiate those past images into the facts of present-day challenge? How ready are we to realise that what happened to this state may not repeat again?

Now, after 150 years when we look at the suffering and misery of the famine, we feel free to look back and commemorate. Indeed, it is more than a feeling of remembrance and revisit but more as introspection.

Addressing malnutrition and food insecurity requires co-ordinated action across a broad spectrum of actors and sectors. Recognizing this, the Government is serious to enhance food grains production and expand the spheres of Food Security. Indeed investing in agriculture's development will be critical on reducing poverty. I commend Odisha's commitment and leadership.

I understand that Odisha has been awarded at the national level as the best performing state for having highest production of food grains with Krishi Karman award for last four years. I would like to suggest devising and accelerating the Comprehensive Framework for Action on Food Security, so that it can continue to be a strong force for co-ordinated action with a range of stakeholders.

Around 70 percent people in Odisha depends on agriculture for their livelihoods. To increase crop yields, poor and marginal farmers need effective agricultural extension services, better seeds and fertilizers, and access to markets. Investment on agricultural research and extension, promoting innovation and new technologies are highly essential. Here the work of the agricultural universities to modernize agriculture is critical. They have to work with partners to introduce improved varieties of paddy and other crops. That would help to boost the production contributing a lot to nutrition and food security.

The changing climate today threatens food production and food security too. Shifts in weather patterns and increasing numbers of natural disasters raise threats of destruction of crops thereby threatening food security and livelihoods on a scale which may lead to possible famine.

Building safety nets to protect farmers and others vulnerable to food insecurity, including through insurance against weather shocks, also helps. There is need to prepare adequately for food emergencies, and strengthen the institutions' needs to cope with the unexpected.

Addressing hunger and ensuring food security, however, is about far more than increasing the availability of food. Food needs to be accessible to all, including the poor and marginalized, and it needs to be sufficiently nutritious. It is important to build the capacities of governments and communities to strengthen food systems. We have to work with local authorities to establish cold storages and manage grain reserves so that those most in need could access food.

As Governor I have witnessed first-hand a number of commemorative events. Today's event helped me to trace the poignant link between the place of famine and the serious consequences thereafter. I could visualise the suffering, the anguish of a past in which men, women and children who were your ancestors barely survived. They had no strength to join in brave actions. All they could do was to move from day to day, overwhelmed by random misfortune, for many the only option being the emigration or face the extinction. It is by the memory of what happened to the people and the desire not to see history repeats itself in denying our fellow human beings basic sustenance is the present day's biggest challenge. The commemoration urges upon everyone to continue to remember those who suffered during the great Odisha Famine, but also continue to make the alleviation of hunger in the 21st century a key priority. This is the only way we can truly honour the victims of the past.

With these words, I wish this commemoration brings a sense of urgency to overcome every challenge to food security with concerted effort and with the help of modern technological advancement.

Jai Hind.

HEALTH AND RESEARCH

Doctor's Day celebration by Indian Medical Association

I am happy to be in your midst this evening on the Doctor's Day celebration organised by the Bhubaneswar Branch of Indian Medical Association. As you all know, Doctor's Day is celebrated on 1st July all across India in remembrance of the legendary physician and former Chief Minister of West Bengal, Bharat Ratna Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy who was born on 1st July in 1882 and passed away on the same date in 1962. I take this opportunity to pay my rich tribute to this illustrious son of the country.

Late Dr. B. C. Roy was a freedom fighter, educationist, physician, social reformer and statesman par excellence. Though he was primarily a physician and an educationist his passion to serve the people and work for the uplift of Indian society brought him to political arena where he became the second Chief Minister of West Bengal. The life and achievements of Dr. B. C. Roy who was a rare personality combined in himself the quality of leadership and the excellence of a medical professional. His life and career were a living example of the popular belief that doctors are noble people who are involved in a noble profession. He firmly believed in often quoted declaration of the Indian Medical Association that is "the health of my patient will be my first consideration." His primary concern was, indeed, the welfare of his patients. He was conscious of the high level of faith and trust reposed in him by his patients who looked to him with hope and expectation and he was ever aware of, and eager to keep up, this trust. His devotion and determination to medical ethics is exceptional. His life of dedicated work and selfless service was a glowing example for those who are in medical profession and also in public life. I am happy that the Bhubaneswar Branch of Indian Medical Association like previous years is celebrating the day to pay tribute to Dr. Roy, one of the founder members and ex-President of the Association. Doctors' Day gives us opportunity to pay tribute to him.

The observance is also an occasion to express gratitude to doctors for their invaluable treatments that cure us and give us new lease of life. They play an important role in all of our lives. The observance obligates the doctors to fulfil their responsibilities as well. On this occasion I extend my good wishes to the members of medical fraternity.

I find that the Bhubaneswar branch has organized a number of events to mark the observance like Super Speciality Mega Health Check-up Camp, health awareness programme for public, Continuing Medical Education programme for doctors besides this function and it is felicitating senior members of medical profession for their devotion and dedication to the profession. On this Doctors' Day, I am happy to note that eminent doctors are being felicitated for their skill and commitment. The society fondly remembers their noble deeds and expects much more from them in future. I congratulate them and wish their examples will inspire others to emulate them.

I am given to understand that the branch is giving importance to immunization of school children in and around the city and it is also partnering with the government for successful implementation of various national health programmes. These measures intend to uphold the nobility of medical profession. The branch has distinguished itself as one of the active branches in the country taking forward the objectives of the Association. I congratulate Bhubaneswar Branch and I am sure it will continue to work hard to take forward the Association's mission of alleviating human suffering.

Medical profession is a noble profession. It is a profession of great humility and service. Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhiji had rightly said, "Medical service is not merely a profession, it is a mission." Those who are practicing this profession hold immense responsibility to ensure comfort to the suffering humanity. They play very significant role in our lives. Being a doctor is not just a job, it is a challenging commitment to service that requires high levels of skill and precision. India has no dearth of qualified and skilled doctors. They are known for their expertise and knowledge. Our doctors have

not only enhanced their sphere of scientific knowledge but also expanded their ability to use knowledge and tools efficiently in the never ending fight against disease and death. Over the years definite progress has been made in medical treatments in India. For this, society owes a debt of gratitude to doctors.

Healthcare can have added significance, provided there is close relationship between those who receive care, the patients and those who provide it, the doctors. Patient-Doctor relationship holds great importance in medical profession. We look at doctors as saviours, next only to God when we are sick and down. Even a small advice from the doctor can work wonders. I urge the doctors not to make any discrimination among patients and make every effort to make patients feel comfortable and free to express their problems which will contribute significantly to enhance patient-doctor relationship. However, it is unfortunate that doctors are often become victims of criticism while their successes are overlooked. We need to realise that like in all other professions, doctors do need appreciation for their work and efforts. On this Doctors' Day let us show our appreciation and say thanks to doctors who care for us and relentlessly make efforts to sustain the life of their patients against all odds.

Good health is an important indicator of human development. A country with a healthy workforce can be more productive than that burdened with sick and ailing workers. So, it should be our prime aim to provide better healthcare services to the people. National Rural Health Mission Programme is a step in this direction. Government has been striving hard to improve healthcare services and make it accessible for everyone. Often there are reports in newspapers on unhygienic conditions in hospitals, lack of proper equipment, shortage of doctors and para-medic staff. Government is taking steps to fill up vacancies on priority basis. But much remains to be done. In this regard the role of doctors and your Association is very important.

Another thing I want to give emphasis here is on the urgent need to bring down Infant Mortality and Maternal Mortality rate which is a great concern for us. Our doctors particularly those serving in rural

areas have to make people aware on preventive measures to be taken, so that they can take care of their health besides providing them all kinds of health services and treatment. We have to ensure good health to our children and mothers so that we can build a bright and safe future. Here I would like that our doctors should not shy away from serving in rural areas rather they treat it as a challenge and enhance their knowledge.

Another point of concern is that the present day's fast pace of life and modern style of living is taking toll of human health to a great extent. The educated mass is seen to be neglecting their health by giving importance to profession. So awareness holds key and I expect the Bhubaneswar branch to take a lead in awareness generation.

On Doctors' Day let us understand the relevance and significance of the day and work for the realisation of healthcare for all. With these words, I wish Bhubaneswar Branch all success in its endeavours towards alleviating human suffering and uphold the honour and dignity of medical profession.

Jai Hind.

1st Foundation Day Celebration of All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar

Today I am happy to join you on the First Foundation Day celebration of AIIMS, Bhubaneswar. During 2003 on the same day, the Foundation stone was laid for this institute and with its functioning it realised the aspirations of the people of Odisha. The occasion is indeed historic, auspicious and joyous as the institute achieves the first milestone completing the first year of its establishment which is always difficult and challenging. I am pleased to note the progress and activities undertaken by the institute in just one year. On this occasion of celebration, I congratulate the Director, Faculty members and Staff for their committed and concerted efforts towards the development of this institute from its infancy. As you know, AIIMS Bhubaneswar along with 5 other AIIMS like institutions under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) was established with the objective of correcting the regional imbalance in the availability of affordable and reliable tertiary care services and to augment facilities for quality medical education in the country. The relevance of this institute to Odisha is significant.

This institute is established on the lines of the original All India Institute of Medical Sciences situated in New Delhi which is viewed as a symbol of excellence in medical sciences both in education and research. Today it stands out as a beacon of hope and succor for the thousands seeking relief from their sufferings. When the tag of AIIMS is attached the expectation automatically goes high, and it is the same with the AIIMS., Bhubaneswar which is a long aspiration of the people of Odisha. It is for all the stakeholders of this institute to realise and act accordingly so that the institute is of great advantage to the people and it lives up to the illustrious image of AIIMS.

I understand that a total of 50 students from different states including Odisha were admitted to this institute as its first batch of the MBBS course that started last year. They are now provided with quality medical education in different fields of Medical Sciences by

efficient and dedicated faculty members. I congratulate the students for opting a profession which is viewed as a profession of great humility and service. Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhiji had rightly said, "Medical service is not merely a profession, it is a mission." Those who are in this profession hold immense responsibility to ensure relief to the suffering humanity. Being a doctor is not just a job, it is a challenging commitment to service that requires high levels of skill and precision. Our students must keep this in mind and they should develop right skills, master professional knowledge and possess right attitudes to serve and glorify the profession further. At the same time they also have a duty towards giving the nation a healthy human resource.

Health is indeed an essential ingredient of development - both of individuals and of nation. The physical and mental growth of children to adolescents is greatly hampered by ill health. Their performance and productivity are also substantially diminished, now and in later life, if they do not enjoy good health. Nation too suffers the consequences of their citizens being unhealthy. Just as poverty contributes to ill health, poor health perpetuates poverty. It is, therefore, essential to do our best to protect, preserve and promote the health of our people.

Good health is not merely a developmental resource - it is an inalienable human right of every citizen of this country. Every Indian has the right to demand and obtain essential preventive, promotive, diagnostic and curative health services. It is the bounden duty of the state as well as society at large to ensure that this right is fully respected and adequately realized.

Medical Sciences have witnessed rapid advances because of application of various technologies and research. As a result, new methods of treatment like laser surgery, robotic surgery, etc. are now made available. Now a doctor practicing in the far end of the country is able to seek suggestions from an expert doctor in any part of the world with the help of Internet. It is important that our health care professionals continue to maintain and develop their knowledge and

skill. Medical institutes must keep in touch continuously with advances in medical sciences and incorporate reliable, newer and most sophisticated diagnostic and therapeutic technologies and update their curriculum regularly. At the same time we also need to improve accessibility of all sections of society to health service. This is all the more important in our country, where there are large numbers of people who require medical services but could not afford. Here I would like to add that in the context of national objective of inclusive growth, it must also include inclusive health which means providing accessible, affordable and quality health care to all.

I believe that our doctors must assume the responsibility of not only treating people, but should also focus on prevention and early diagnosis of disease. This requires creating an awareness among people. In this too, medical educational institutions can be helpful by holding awareness camps. I am happy that AIIMS, Bhubaneswar is already taking such initiatives to enhance health literacy among all sections of people and I hope they will continue to undertake programmes in health education and assist in community empowerment.

Dear students, I understand you must now be aware of the health sector scenario in Odisha in terms of its challenges and its promise. While Odisha is making rapid strides to catch up with the pace of economic development in the country, we at the same time must look at social development which is equally important. To achieve social development, health is an important factor and Odisha's health indicators indicate urgent attention. To provide comprehensive healthcare for all our citizens remains a challenge. Government is trying to address this challenge through the National Rural Health Mission which seeks to reduce inequities in health in rural areas and is also designed to greatly improve access to essential health services and to enhance citizens' control over healthcare planning. The Mission has benefitted Odisha in a significant way but we have to go a long way.

In spite of our efforts the penetration of health services remains unequal and is particularly low in rural areas where medical facilities

are limited. The relevance of this institute to Odisha is significant to bring down maternal mortality rate (MMR) which is 303 while the national average is 212. Likewise, the infant mortality rate (IMR) in Odisha is presently 69 as compared to the national average of 54. Improving maternal health is one of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by 189 countries including India. The target set is to reduce the MMR by three quarter by 2015, and to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015. Odisha continues to have a high IMR rate in the country. It is an indication enough to intensify our efforts at different levels starting with the household through the community to tertiary health services before time ticks away. In Odisha, we certainly have a task in our hands. As most of the maternal and infant deaths are preventable, our health professionals at the periphery have to play a vital role in reducing maternal and infant mortality through proper interventions, and sensitise people on benefits from different health programmes like Janani Suraksha Yojna. Institutional delivery plays an important role in reducing the maternal and infant deaths. The focus of AIIMS Bhubaneswar lies in bridging the gap in accessibility of such services and makes a difference.

We must also address the capacity gap among health personnel. We need public health professionals equipped with expertise and managerial skills to design and deliver health programmes at the national level and down to the village level. I expect the AIIMS Bhubaneswar to invest in capacity-building in existing public health institutions across the state.

Odisha requires state-of-the-art health care facilities in the field of speciality and super speciality disciplines. AIIMS, Bhubaneswar was conceived and supposed to provide state-of-the-art health care services in all possible fields of medicine at tertiary level and try to fulfil the gap. The institute shall deliver clinical service and impart quality medical as well as paramedical education and generate human resources.

Dear students, you should be conscious of the faith and trust reposed on you as doctors. All look upon you with hope and expectations. As member of this noble profession, you must always work to maintain this trust in your practice and apply your knowledge in a very responsible way. Always remember that doctor – patient relationship is an important part of the therapeutic process. Patient should feel that doctor cares for them because a doctor is like God to Patients. I want our young students to develop an interest for research in their field as it is fundamental in finding cures for many diseases and also for improving your understanding of the functioning of the human body. Research has led us to many revolutionary discoveries yet the field is wide open for further work.

AIIMS Bhubaneswar is running smoothly, with the help of qualified, and experienced faculties, and the supporting staff. It has many issues on its agenda. While improving the existing infrastructure and facilities, and appointment of faculties is in its immediate plan, the institute, I am sure will strive hard to produce doctors of high calibre, to meet the demands of the modern health care services, and quality medical education and play key role in Odisha's social and economic development.

With these words, I wish our students bright future and the AIIMS Bhubaneswar all the very best in its future endeavours.

Jai Hind.

Annual Celebration of Milal Heart Foundation Organized by MHF, Korea

I am happy to be here today for the Annual Celebration of Milal Heart Fondation (MHF) organised by the Foundation's Odisha unit. When it is a Foundation for health care and heart care in particuiar the occasion assumes a lot of significance. It is a celebration of the commitment of the Foundation to save precious human lives and take care of the heart patients.

This noble venture can be traced back to the last 27 years when Mr. Lee J. J. responded promptly to a father's desperate cry to save her daughter who was suffering from a heart disease and he gave her a new lease of life and this incident prompted Mr. Lee to set up Milal Heart Foundation to reach out to more people suffering from heart diseases and save more lives. It is heartening that MHF has grown to be a distinctive heart care provider. I am given to understand that MHF now spreads its wings to nine countries including India and has successfully operated more than 3000 heart patients. I find that opening of its branch in Odisha is similar to the birth of MHF in South Korea in 1987. It happened when poor parents of a little boy from Gajapati approached MHF Hyderabad where the heart operation was done successfully. I am told that MHF set up its branch in Odisha following an MOU signed with the SCB Medical College and Hospital, Cuttack in 2005.

It is heartening to note that the Odisha unit has till date successfully operated on 300 patients and gives priority to BPL category patients and the Foundation takes care of the patients after the operation and in the same spirit keeps in touch with them giving proper advice and develops a bond with its patients for rest of the life. I know that if people get the information at the need of the hour they relish in taking control of themselves.

The project called 'Scholarship' is a laudable initiative by MHF that goes beyond the medical field to provide basic needs for the heart

patients' children. I offer my congratulations to the Foundation for making the complex simple, for making the threatening manageable. Very appropriately, a day-long free Heart Check Up camp is being organized alongside the celebration where I am told, 300 patients from all over the State are expected to attend.

The World Health Organization (WHO) warns us that heart disease will reach epidemic proportions in the next decade or two - unless we take decisive counter-measures. In India, it sometimes, affects the young breadwinners of the family. Even young women, who were earlier considered to be less vulnerable because of the cardio-protective effects of the hormones, are now falling prey to heart disease and the blame can be laid on lifestyle changes. We now find small children suffering from congenital heart disease too.

It is a great news that a vaccine to prevent heart attack could soon be a reality. The news magazine 'The Week' in its recent edition has published a cover story titled 'Game changer Life saver'. The report states that an Indian doctor Prof. Vijay V. Kakkar, emeritus professor at the University of London and the founder-director of Thrombosis Research Institute (TRI) who has won international acclaim for his studies on blood clots and blood thinners is working alongwith his team of researchers to develop Atherovac, a vaccine to prevent heart attack which could even prevent strokes. This breakthrough is now in progress at the Institute in Bangalore, which is a part of the vaccine project. If things go as per plan it is reported, the candidate vaccine should be ready for clinical trials in about three years' time. The report states that the vaccine, Atherovac, is based on the finding that long-term inflammation is the root cause of heart disease. As infections and immune responses cause inflammation, Oxidative changes to lipoproteins can lead to an autoimmune response.

The report has no doubt provided excitement and enthusiasm for the general population, including the young, who could also benefit from the vaccine as a preventive measure particularly when there is a worrying statistics before us. India is estimated to account for 60 per cent of heart patients worldwide. About one lakh twenty thousand

heart surgeries are performed in India every year against a requirement of 2.5 million. It is learnt that almost one-third of all first heart attacks occur in people who are below 45 and 11 per cent of adults living in urban India suffer from heart disease. Incidence of cardiovascular diseases is reported to be more or less similar in urban and rural areas- 14.4 million and 16 million, respectively.

In India, coronary artery disease (CAD) is one of the leading causes of mortality. According to the India Disease Incidence and Prevalence Report 2012, CAD will constitute 54 per cent of all cardiovascular deaths in India by the end of this decade. In Odisha alone, new cardiac cases are diagnosed each year, with an unusually high number among young people.

Developing a vaccine to prevent heart attack is very much relevant for a country like India. An oral vaccine, Atherovac will protect the heart by restoring the immune tolerance to the proteins and reducing vascular inflammation by balancing the immune system. At a time when both the young and the old are equally at risk of developing a heart condition, the vaccine offers hope. Hopefully, it is effective. It may revolutionise the way we treat a segment of heart patients.

It will be incorrect if we were to look at health coverage only in terms of curative and interventionist approach. Preventive healthcare is equally important where the number of those suffering from cardio-vascular diseases is on the rise and that is one of the reasons for the Government's emphasis on Primary care. It is in Primary Care that people can get - early and often - the information to help them shape a healthy lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle that can help prevent stroke.

Ensuring universal health care is a major concern before us. The rapid growth of high end technologies for diagnosis and treatment offers new hopes and the fact that life expectancy has increased and the elderly people need adequate health support has posed a challenge before the scientists and researchers. It presents opportunities for the medical fraternity and other service providers too. The Government is encouraging private investment in the healthcare sector and is now developing Public – Private Partnerships to improve availability of

healthcare services and healthcare financing. It is good to see growing interest among foreign players to enter India's healthcare sector through capital investments, technology tie-ups, and collaborative ventures in diagnostics, medical equipment, big hospital chains, education and training.

There is no denying that the healthcare delivery gap is still huge in the country. The public health system must be greatly expanded and strengthened to achieve universal health care. We need to develop effective models of healthcare to reach urban as well as rural population.

Odisha is keeping pace with sophisticated equipments and proficiencies in cardiology and cardiac care. Throughout the world, the cost of good health care is prohibitively high - especially for poorer populations. This is where MHF plays important role giving priority to poor patients who are unable to afford their costly heart care.

I look forward to MHF to grapple with this public concern and the MHF Korea Odisha with its expertise and partnering premier medical institution of the State is ideally positioned to address heart ailments and making it accessible to those who cannot normally afford them. Let us put behind the day when people thought they had to go to other parts of the country to find quality medical care and heart treatment. With these words, I wish MHF Korea Odisha all success in its future endeavours.

Jai Hind.

East Zone YUVA FOGSI (Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Society of India) Conference

It gives me immense pleasure to join you today, for the inauguration of the East Zone YUVA FOGSI (Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Society of India) Conference held at Bhubaneswar, the Capital City of Odisha. This Conference, I am told, is attended by Gynaecologists from East Zone and other parts of the country to interact and further advance their professional knowledge.

I appreciate the dedication of our many senior obstetricians and gynaecologists who serve as role models with their commitment and professionalism. To continue with this legacy and keeping an eye on the future we need to nurture new generation of Gynaecology & Obstetrics Professionals. There are six core competencies namely medical knowledge, patient care, professionalism, interpersonal skills and communication, practice based learning and systems based practice. These must be inculcated in our young professionals to provide right leadership, deliver excellent patient care, provide medical education and carry out outstanding research. I urge upon the young professionals to remain connected to the institutions which will help them to serve not only as top clinicians, but also as educators and researchers. The Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Society of India (FOGSI) must explore ways to tap on collective resource of experience, knowledge and skills for the betterment of the profession.

Being in this profession the distinguished delegates better know - how much vital are Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the medical healthcare system. These disciplines deal with the precious lives of the mother and the child. Mother is the pillar of strength of the home and of the nation. By ensuring better health of our women and children we can build a strong and healthy nation. Any neglect towards them will cost us dearly. When women constitute half of our population how can we neglect them? It is the future of children that depends a lot on the

health of the mother. However, it is seen that health and nutrition of women are neglected due to a number of economic and social factors like poverty and education. Poverty and ignorance have increased the threat of child malnutrition, malnutrition among pregnant women and high rates of anaemia in them. Being viewed as the most vulnerable section of our society, poor women should get the paramount attention in the health care system. The health of our new-born children and womenfolk is quite vital for the well-being of the nation. As professionals of these disciplines, you have an important responsibility towards educating the community.

A healthy child is a great boon to the society. Today concern no longer lies only in helping women conceive, but also on minimising the risk of complications in pregnancy and premature birth. Maternal mortality has profound consequences within the household, because the chances of death of children under age five are more when the mother dies.

As specialists you have the responsibility of bringing into the world life with its full potential intact at birth. The challenge today before obstetrics and gynaecologists is to deliver good care with a holistic approach to the individual, the family and the society. The focus must always be on safe motherhood and the welfare of the patient and the family. Our technologies, knowledge and skills are only the means to this end.

India is successfully fighting to overcome gloomy picture in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR). The statistics at the national level and the state level reveal that Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Rate have been significantly reduced because of the consistent efforts of the Government. The efficacy of Janani Suraksha Yojana and persistent efforts of our doctors and paramedics are quite significant in the context. However, we need to continue to work hard and with renewed commitment towards improving maternal and infant care. Our obstetric and prenatal care has to be wide spread and accessible to further decline the rate.

Obstetrics and Gynaecology have made rapid strides with newer methods of treatment. The care of cancers has become increasingly specialised. Development of newer surgical procedures means that long hospitalisations are no longer necessary for treatment particularly in gynaecologic oncology and uro-gynaecology. However, we need highly specialised professionals to deal with conditions that are potentially life-threatening and complex. At the same time I expect our specialists to remain broad-based and patient centric, rather than disease centric because they are not dealing with parts of the body but the whole person living in a family and in the society.

Health is an important indicator of a nation's development. Today we are excited finding India becoming a force to reckon with at the global level with advancement in major sectors. We have significant progress in health sector with focus on new health infrastructure. But there are some home truths that we are unaware of or are deliberately turning a deaf ear to them. They are female foeticide and female infanticide, two heinous evils existing in our society. These are reflection of two unethical practices: abortion and gender bias. The abortion of female foetuses is a "national shame" and a "terrible onslaught on our civilisation". Today there are disturbing reports that the ugly practice has spread to places where this practice did not exist earlier.

The Central Government, by enacting Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994 has not only declared the misuse of Ultrasound and other medical techniques but also condemned sex determination as a criminal offence. But looking at the statistics I find that there is a need for strong and effective enforcement of the law to punish the offenders and to put an end to the cruel practice of gender-specific abortions. The practice of prenatal sex determination and killing the girl child is a cruel and abominable act that has to be stopped.

I expect the doctors to discourage the practice, not to entertain any such heinous proposal. They should spread an awareness campaign and make sure that the girl child remains high on the public

agenda. I see an equally important role for media. I would like to urge upon all concerned to offer their support to stop female foeticide.

Here I want to highlight the menace of female foeticide and infanticide which has adversely affected Indian society. The biggest and most easily measurable effect is the low female-to-male ratio. In fact the decennial Indian census reveals that the number of female infants comparing to male infants has dropped from 976 girls per 1000 boys in 1961 to 918 girls per 1000 boys in 2011. The decline in Child Sex Ratio (0—6 years) during 2001—2011 in rural areas is more than three times as compared to the drop in urban India. Though, the overall sex ratio of the country is showing a trend of improvement, the child sex ratio is showing a declining trend, which is a matter of great concern.

If such utterly shameful decline in the number of girls continues, I fear families of eligible young men would get it increasingly difficult to find brides. This will surely have a destabilizing effect in the society. All out efforts must be taken to stop such callous, inhuman practice by all concerned, especially by the Medical practitioners.

The role of the obstetrician is vital in controlling the population growth and thereby building the nation. Most of you are not only participating in promoting family planning through a variety of interventions but also, as educated professionals, becoming excellent role models for women's education and women's employment which are vehicles of social change. It is to be seen that more initiative has to be taken in adopting family planning measures. The doctors and basic health workers like ANMs and ASHAs should intensify family planning concept and convince couples about family planning measures like sterilization, copper-T and oral pills. Here I would like to give more stress on educating and creating awareness on the benefits of family planning measures.

The Gynaecologists have also to tackle a variety of other ailments apart from those associated with childbirth. In this respect the Gynaecologists have to bear a far greater responsibility and have to

keep themselves abreast of the latest developments in the field of medical science.

Our ultimate aim and endeavour is to provide better patient care. I note that the Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Society of India, and Bhubaneswar Obstetric and Gynaecological Society, the co-organisers of this Conference are committed to it. Here I would like to suggest on improving patient communication which I feel is highly important as our health professionals strive to improve patient care and service delivery. I would like this platform to explore ways and means to transform quality of care by enhancing collaboration and partnerships.

Doctors have become an important part of our lives. They are termed as next to God as they deal with and save human lives. From minor flu to fractures, from delivery of baby to complicated surgical procedures in some way or the other we need doctors. Medical Science has achieved new means of treatment and this success is due to the endless efforts of our doctors and researchers. Many new drugs and techniques are being developed which add to the compliance and success of the therapy. There is nothing nobler than saving human lives, is there? That is why the profession is called a noble profession. Being a doctor is truly an enlightening job. Your opinions matter and make a difference. There is a hue and cry from all quarters that the medical profession is no longer "the noble profession". Why are these happening and what are the causes behind this? I understand that today the expectations of patients and their relatives are high. People are in a hurry and want quick results. But the doctor-patient relationship still is vital and this relationship must endure with good understanding. A good relationship contributes to the confidence, solace and easy recovery of patients and helps doctors to render their best possible services. I hope doctors and patients both realise this.

To conclude, I can say that Conferences deliver new ideas and knowledge by exchange of ideas and sharing of knowledge which directly affect patient care and expertise. I am sure this conference will be a great scientific festival with wonderful opportunities to learn

about the advances in Gynaecology and Obstetrics and benefit our specialists. I expect the distinguished participants to navigate new frontiers in patient care taking into account the changing panorama of women's health with their knowledge and expertise. With this note, I wish very fruitful deliberations at this East Zone Conference of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Jai Hind.

Neuro Update – 2015

It gives me immense pleasure to join with you at the opening of 'Neuro Update 2015', organized by the Foundation for Research Innovation Education & Care in Neurological Disorders (FRIEND) in association with the Institute of neurosciences, Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar. I am told that 'Neuro Update' is organized with a principal aim of academic activities for the benefit of students, practicing neurologists and neurosurgeons and this unique continuous medical education programme held annually is in its second year.

I congratulate 'The Friend' Foundation and its Chairman Dr.B.K. Mishra for taking this initiative to promote neurological health issues and spread recent thinking amongst the health care professionals. It is also a pleasure for me to know that differently abled children are encouraged by the Foundation to take up health care topics. Felicitating physicians who have spent their lifetime tirelessly for the cause of patients is certainly a welcome venture.

It is a pleasure to know that besides providing state-of-the-art health care facility, Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar is taking lead in participating in various neurological programmes such as World Federation of Neurosurgery Conference and Continuous Medical Education (CME) programmes of this nature. This will certainly set a fine example for others to come forward and promote health care education and extend quality health care in the State.

Access to health care is a basic human right and a worldwide social goal. Health is necessary for realization of basic human needs and attains the goal of a meaningful life. However, neurological disorders often found among all age groups are becoming a serious concern. While predictions point to higher risk among poor people, children, adolescents and elderly persons, no population group is immune to neurological disorders. Increased life expectancy leads to increase in the neurological disorders such as Alzheimer, Parkinson's disease and other dementias among the older and ageing persons. Because most of the neurological disorders result in long-term

disability, measures of prevalence and mortality vastly understate the disability they cause. The socio-economic demands of care, treatment and rehabilitation of the patients put a strain on entire families, seriously diminishing their productivity and quality of life.

The stigma often associated with neurological disorders adds to the social and economic burden. One of the most damaging results of stigmatization is that affected individuals or those responsible for their care may not seek treatment, hoping to avoid the negative social consequences of diagnosis. Indeed, in some communities, the stigma leads to the denial of basic human rights. It aggravates the vicious cycle of illness and social negative reaction and leads to social exclusion and discrimination. Epilepsy, one of the most common neurological conditions, is well understood and accepted in many societies. Yet in many others, epilepsy is considered contagious or the sign of a curse or evil disposition, with blame for the condition attached to the family as well as to the patient. The direct and indirect discriminatory behavior and factual choices by others cause substantial reduction in societal opportunities such as education, marriage or work, or may result in being excluded from community activities. Fortunately, stigma and its negative effect on quality of life can be substantially reduced by better arrest control, highlighting the need for effective treatment.

Many neurological disorders can be prevented and treated. One of the important actions required by the health sector is an immunization programme for the prevention of neuro-infections and the neurological consequences of infections. It is good news that cost-effective interventions are available. For many of the neurological disorders there are inexpensive but effective interventions that could be applied on a large scale through primary care. However, the massive treatment gap is attributable to a paucity of epilepsy services, trained personnel and proper drugs. Aspirin is by far the most cost-effective intervention both for treating acute stroke and for preventing a recurrence. It is easily available, even in rural areas. Nevertheless, the

coverage of the affected population with this inexpensive treatment is still extremely low.

A comprehensive strategy combining prevention, community-based health promotion and access to treatment can substantially decrease the burden of neurological disorders. Diabetes significantly contributes to the onset of neurological disorders and it is expected that with the effective implementation of the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Diabetes there would be a tangible reduction in such disorders.

Disability consequent to neurological disorders can be decreased by rehabilitation programmes and policies. Building ramps and other facilities to improve access by disabled people falls beyond the purview of the health sector but is nevertheless very important for comprehensive management of people with disability.

There is an immediate need to strengthen neurological care within the existing health systems. The most promising approach for reducing the burden of neurological disorders is a comprehensive system of primary health care: primary care services supported by secondary and tertiary care facilities, physicians and specialists. Primary care is the point of entry for the vast majority of people seeking medical care – indeed, for many people it is their sole access to medicine. Moreover, because primary care teams work in the community, they are well placed to recognize factors such as stigma, family problems and cultural factors that affect treatment for neurological disorders. Thus, primary care is the logical setting in which neurological disorders need to be dealt with. The important role of primary care is also founded on recognition that decisions in primary care take account of patient-related factors -- family medical history and patients' individual expectations and values – of which the continuity and long-term relationships of primary care generate awareness, while promoting trust and satisfaction among patients.

Awareness of public health aspects of neurological disorders needs to be raised through the launch of national and local campaigns and initiatives that target health professionals, general practitioners,

primary care physicians, specialists in public health, neurologists, the media and the general public.

There is an urgent need to define priorities for research. The research agenda, including operational research, needs to be developed to gain better understanding of the problem so that appropriate responses can be developed and evaluated. It is necessary to develop and evaluate simple models of care for management of neurological disorders by existing community-based health-care providers. Newer medications need to be developed with lower costs, fewer side-effects, better efficacy, and less frequent dose schedules. It is heartening that the contributions of young researchers working in the area of neurosciences are recognized and the awards instituted will surely encourage them.

It is hoped that 'Neuro Update' will contribute to the knowledge base regarding public health aspects of neurological disorders. Inspiring and facilitating increased cooperation, innovation and commitment in preventing neurological disorders and providing the best possible care for people suffering from them are quite important factors. I am sure the gathering of professionals and allied health professionals in related fields will promote greater interest in the ever-widening field of Neurosciences and encourage research activities. I hope that 'The Friend' will continue to bring enthusiasm about constructive and meaningful development of this very special branch of medical science among the health professionals and help them update on important neurological issues. By working together, I am sure, we will strengthen existing relationships while building new networks not just locally but also regionally and internationally.

With these words, I wish very productive and meaningful deliberations and 'Neuro Update-2015' all success.

Jai Hind.

68th Commemoration Function of SCB Medical College and Hospital

While conveying to you all my best wishes, let me admit before my august audience that whenever I have come to any Medical College and Hospital during the last six decades in different capacities, two diametrically opposite emotions gripped me: sorrow and happiness. Sorrow because more than six decades ago I had landed in Calcutta's Scottish Church College with the sole aim of studying Science and thereafter, becoming a Doctor! For some days I had attended Science Classes, but ultimately that desire had to be buried inside my heart due to a number of reasons and my father was perhaps the saddest man at that time! And then happiness because whenever an opportunity came on my way to attend programmes associated with Doctors or Medical Science, I always thought that this was another opportunity for sharing ideas with the nation's best brains.

I am not here to burden you all with advice and statistics to drive home the point how equipments worth hundreds of crores continue to rot in different hospitals, or the patient doctor ratio in our country, or shortage of specialists and super specialist, or why and how fake medicine rackets continue to flourish here despite our all out efforts or why certain drugs are exorbitantly priced despite their cost of production being very low, or why our young doctors are sincerely reluctant to serve in tribal and remote areas etc etc. These are serious and important issues no doubt, but I do not think I should spoil your evening. There are serious challenges before the nation and before the state also. Hon'ble Minister, Mr. Nayak is here and he is a young man with vast experience. As we all are aware, his action on some issues have been concrete, practical, progressive and forward looking. This evening I would love just to interact with you all, identifying some challenge areas and what best can be done to overcome those. I would also have loved to hear from you all, to know the pulse!! I hope you will consider them, evaluate them in your heart of hearts and then chart

out, if possible, individual corrective answers to bring about changes in our society.

Now let me quote here what the former British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill had observed long ago, "Healthy citizens are the greatest asset any country have." How can the nation ensure that its citizens remain healthy? The answer to this question is not easy to find. Hundreds of interwoven social-cultural-economic-moral problems will crop up during debate, making it almost impossible to pinpoint any reason singular! Yet the bitter reality is that we spend billions on health sector to save lives year after year, but fail to invest in sectors that would have created world class health infrastructure. To ensure that the citizens are healthy, it is neither laboratories nor new or modern medicines that will ensure good health! The key to good health comprises of some basic behavioral practices! All of us know what those practices are, yet only some of us are mentally or physically prepared to practise them! Somehow, people in the twenty and twenty-first century have developed this thick skinned attitude to health related issues. It is as if a statement on human arrogance that declares – (a) nothing is going to happen to me (b) even if, something happens, I have enough money to avail the services of the best in the business!! The solution to this lies elsewhere. Massive awareness drive has to be undertaken in every part of the state. However, if doctors involved themselves in such campaign, it would yield better results. Good food habits, good routine and good positive attitude will go a long way in keeping heart diseases at any.

Now a word or two about our future challenges. In fact, twenty first century challenges have already emerged and many more have been emerging. As the world is being relentlessly squeezed into a compact global village by Information Technology, smart phone, more powerful satellite etc, the challenges are also no longer that much localized as they used to be a decade or two ago. Or may be, people do not attach the desired level of importance to localized challenges! May be, for a modern man like you, modern challenges present an opportunity to showcase your leadership ability.

You represent the best of youth power. And you all are aware of that. You are as good as or even better, than your counterparts elsewhere. And you have all the best of technology at your fingertip. If in the early 19 twenties or 19 fifties, no one could imagine of starting a revolution, now a days within minutes, millions of people join hands and begin a revolution online! This has enormous power and enormous reach. And this has the power to bring about changes in quick time. Yet these are started on a computer or mobile set. While your forefathers were onto the battleground in a flash, you are onto your gadget in a flash!!

Now against this backdrop, let us quickly identify challenges faced by India as a nation and Odisha as a state. But then why do I tell you all there? You have a secure future, you have a guaranteed job anywhere in India and abroad; and you suddenly realize that you are the envy of others!

Precisely that is reason why I am telling you all these. With security – I mean socio-economic security you cannot and you should not think of living in a cocoon! You have to think of your state and your nation. And you also can not forget the millions who could have been like you but who, despite talent have suffered. I vividly rember the case of a brilliant tribal boy, whom I met in a village in Maharashtra while I was Governor of that state. He was asked by a group of students several questions, this boy stood up and raised this issue. How can tribal people from the remotest parts of the country pursue medical studies? I was dumbfounded. The boy said each seat was more than rupees sixty/ seventy lakhs. It is never possible. In fact, since that day I have been searching for an answer! Here in lies the challenge. And challenges like these should bother you.

Now let us outline some of the challenges like this:-

(a) The challenge is to ensure quality, yet affordable higher education. And it should be accessible to the willing ones having brilliance.

(b) Violence has raised its ugly head in different parts of the world as well as in India. How best this can be handled is difficult, but not impossible.

(c) With globalization, rapid infrastructure building and industrialization, now people have increased purchasing power. In a sense, a sort of materialism has gripped almost everyone. I am not against people becoming rich, but if that happens at the cost of care, love, concern and compassion for the poor, then we have reasons to be worried.

(d) Raising the employability quotient of our students is a monuments challenge.

(e) Challenges in health sector are many and it requires careful planning and a positive mindset to overcome.

(f) For me, the biggest challenges staring at your wnen you leave this Institution will be: how successfully or efficiently you carry onto your job in the face of lack of infrastructure?

(g) Identification of talent early is one of the trickiest of challenges. Once talent is identified, the next step should be to guide them on different paths ie, the path of their choice

The People of Odisha are intellectually inclined. I am aware that once the challenges are identified, people will forget differences if any, and their intellectual prowess will take over.

Now that Bhubaneswar has been selected in the list of Smart City and with the Government of India's focus on Make in India, Swachha Bharat etc, our job is to strive hard to set examples than others would love to emulate elsewhere.

My dear friends, I had begun my address with a quote from Winston Churchill and hence let me end my address with an anecdote involving Mr. Churchill that I think would amuse my young friends.

Churchill, as everyone knows, was a Chainsmoker and he loved his evening drinks. It was during the celebration of his 75th Birthday that one over enthusiastic young pressman of 30 years asked him a question that few ever dared to ask.

"Mr. Churchill", the young pressman asked, "you smoke non-stop and you drink regularly! I hope I would be able to click your 100th Birthday Photograph!"

Churchill understood the undertone of the comment, and then replied, "Yeah .... Young man! You are so young. Why can not you take my 100th Birthday Photograph? Is there any doubt in your mind"?

By this the great Britishman implied that even if he smoked and drank, he would live up to 100, but why the young photo man was under any doubt that he might not live till that long !!.

Dear friends! Of course you should not follow the great man!

With these words, I wish you all the very best in life. And I would appeal to you all not to forget the plight of the common man.

Jai Hind.

Inauguration of 5th World Endoscopic Spine Society Congress & AMRICON

I am delighted to be with you today for the inauguration of the 5th World Endoscopic Spine Society (WESS) Congress organised under the aegis of Odisha Orthopaedic Association. AMRI Hospitals, Bhubaneswar is proud to be a co-organiser of this important global event. The Temple City of Bhubaneswar is an inspired choice for the venue of this World Congress. I find that the city has the honour of hosting another edition of World Congress this year after 2013. I am happy to note that AMRI Group of Hospitals has been organising AMRICON over the years, which I am told, as a knowledge sharing platform that caters to the medical fraternity, and this year they have associated AMRICON with the 5th World WESS Congress.

I would like to congratulate the organizers. They have put together a remarkable and wide-ranging programme with live demonstration attracting delegations from across the world that includes orthopaedics, neurosurgeons, spine surgeons, expert in minimal invasive spine and endospine procedures and brought together an impressive list of eminent speakers.

The World Endoscopic Spine Society Congress has evolved as an important international platform for all orthopaedicians and spine disorder relief and treatment experts as well as health care professionals to discuss and brainstorm important issues. This would certainly help to develop new treatments to improve spinal health of people all around the globe. I look forward to some new happenings during the current Congress.

Spinal injuries and disorders be it neck, back or other musculo-skeletal injuries are not only painful but devastating and life-altering injury. Most pain problems are often treated by several forms of therapy like medications, physical therapy, surgery, nerve stimulation, and behavioral forms of therapy such as biofeedback and stress

management. Obviously not every form of treatment is appropriate for every patient condition. It is the doctor who only finds which therapy is useful for the patient.

To get rid of spinal problems or injuries one is often advised surgery. Spinal surgery, for a layman like me is traditionally open surgery and for many it is threatening. But thanks to advances in medical science that now the advanced technologies are making things easier and hassle free for the patients. Surgeons are now opting minimally invasive surgical techniques for treating more back and neck injuries. This less invasive spine surgery proved to be advantageous in many ways for it doesn't involve a long incision; recovery is faster with no damage to the area surrounding the spine and less post- surgical pain. Not only in relieving or decreasing pain but also the new techniques help the patients in returning to daily activities in a short period. This is the miracle of medical science.

It is heartening that the World Endoscopic Spine Society that believes on worldwide truth and trust has a caring and dedicated team of minimally invasive spine care specialists on its side, who help patients alleviating pain and easing the stress of living with a chronic spine injury or disease. Your commitment deserves thanks for making a positive difference to the lives of many suffering individuals and families.

While it is important that we acknowledge the remarkable journey you have travelled under one roof and the achievement you have gained, now it is your job as health care professionals and pain relievers to look to the future; I mean, contributing significantly to a world of healthy people. So when we talk about a healthy people, what exactly does it mean? The thematic sessions at this Congress would provide a good answer.

Generally, health is conceived as a precondition, an outcome and indicator of sustainable development. It is important not to lose this vital insight. Public health, if it is to be an effective force, must look beyond the immediate determinants of disease. We have to look

at the social and economic determinants of ill health; not just the causes, but the essential truth behind the causes.

With today's busy and stressful life, many of us give attention to health a backseat and as a result different health ailments catch us and often become chronic making life difficult and miserable. Unless one is fit both physically and mentally his productivity will be lessened and the society will be at a loss. The ever increasing number of such people bears a distinct proportion to the share of the global burden of diseases.

As spine care specialists you are well aware that your horizon is more challenging. No longer can you afford to focus only on the immediate causes of spine health disorder. But even as we struggle to increase access to existing medicines, and promote the development of new tools relevant to the needs of the poor, we face equally the urgent problem of preserving what we have got. Education, research and training hold key to improve the techniques of minimally invasive spine surgeries. As professionals you have to focus on research for developing minimally invasive spine techniques and technologies and to make these treatments accessible and affordable to the underprivileged sections of society. Expectations for better health are rising. Health has to be seen as a right for all, not a privilege for the few. Health equity must be a cornerstone of your working environment.

The World Congress must aim to establish a cooperative association in order to pool talents and resources, to formulate programmes for studies and research, as well as to improve the services in healthcare delivery to the people across nations. This will not only benefit individual communities, but the world as a whole.

This year's Congress brings together in Bhubaneswar the best minds in minimal invasive spinal care from across the world. As a community of health care professionals you can make a difference and this platform would help you towards achieving the best practice in the field of endoscopic surgery for spinal care to the world community. I hope, this year's Congress will enrich you professionally, help

building strong relationships among you and shape your work for the future as you get to share ideas and broaden knowledge on endoscopic spine procedures through cadaver workshops, live surgeries and hands on workshops. It will redouble your energy, spirit and attitude of professionalism and altruism to reach the countries with medical support and help them spreading and nurturing care, and universal human values. I am sure Odisha will be gainer to a large extent of treating a wide variety of disorders by holding this event and will offer best services to our patients in a way that is minimally invasive.

With these words, I wish you all very interactive and productive sessions and the 5th World Endoscopic Spine Society (WESS) Congress and AMRICON all success.

Jai Hind.

Inaugural Function of the 4th Annual Conference of Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India

I am happy to be here this afternoon for the inauguration of the Fourth Annual Conference of Odisha Chapter of Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI). Formed in the year 2000 the Odisha Chapter is committed to provide better care for diabetes patients with focus on protection and management of the disease in the State. Being a state chapter of the largest organization of diabetes health care professionals and researchers in Asia the responsibility and expectation no doubt is high. It is heartening that the state chapter is benefitted immensely from the vast professional knowledge and guidance from a number of stalwarts in the field of diabetes. Your society of Diabetes health care professionals including researchers is established for ensuring academic activity and research and holding scientific meetings, and providing training facilities for research.

I am told that this conference is organized with the ultimate goal of establishing the state-of-art in the field, identifying gaps, and brainstorming on approaches for prevention and better management of diabetes. I am further told that eminent physicians are participating as guest faculties and they would deliberate on various aspects of Diabetes in India. I wish it will help enriching professional knowledge of the members for better treatment and management of diabetes.

I hardly need tell this august audience about the challenges being faced all around the world by the increasing incidence of chronic diseases. We are all aware of them.

Diabetes is one such disease that is now a household disease. The chronic nature of the disease, the tremendous impact on the life and health of millions of individuals and families along with its epidemic dimensions has created in many of us a feeling of concern. The current trend of incidence and prevalence of diabetes and associated diseases makes it a public health problem and represents a challenge to public policies, health services and communities.

In its 2015 Diabetes Atlas, International Diabetes Federation (IDF) estimated that 415 million people are currently living with diabetes; many as yet undiagnosed and untreated. To put this in an even more graphic way, if the people in the world with diabetes today lived in one country, it would be the third largest in the world after China and India. IDF estimated that, if nothing is done to address the growing diabetes epidemic, by 2040 the global figure will rise to 642 million – or one in 10 adults.

India, called the diabetes capital of the world has been witnessing an alarming rise in incidence of diabetes and as many as 50 million people are suffering from type-2 diabetes. The dramatic increase in new cases of diabetes, particularly Type 2 diabetes, has developed into one of the major medical and health-policy problems of today. Due to their negative impact on the quality of life for patients and also on the socio-economic situation, Type 2 diabetes and its complications are a major public health concern. In that way we have a challenge to face.

If we take the case of Odisha it is not encouraging. A recent newspaper report states that Khurda and Cuttack are among top 20 districts with high prevalence high blood sugar level, a marker of diabetes, among 284 districts of nine states, which were parts of the latest clinical, anthropometric and bio-chemical survey conducted by the Registrar General of India. According to doctors it is certainly a reflection of changing lifestyle and unhealthy eating habits.

Despite the significant scientific advances of the last century, diabetes remains a major health challenge across the country and the world. No country, rich or poor, is immune to the epidemic. It is indeed alarming.

Today, we face three problems: the alarming increase in diabetes in our country and worldwide; a lack of awareness surrounding diabetes prevention, and many of its common complications and a lack of patient-empowering treatments that reduce the burden of diabetes management. But there is good news on the horizon. New combinations of diabetes research with digital technologies are leading to innovative opportunities for treatments.

The burgeoning load of diabetes is a real threat for all of us, underscored by the constraints of the health system in terms of manpower

and capacity. Workable strategies for ensuring timely and appropriate management require extensive linkage and support for enhancing the availability of trained manpower, investigational facilities and drugs. Primary prevention through promotion of healthy lifestyles and risk reduction is recognized as the most cost-effective intervention in resource-poor settings. However, we also need to properly plan for the care of the sizeable number of people with diabetes, in order to prevent and decrease morbidity due to complications. A health system strengthening approach with standards of care at all levels and regulatory framework can help in tackling this challenge.

Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes requires public policies that promote healthy lifestyles such as healthy diets and physical activity without neglecting the importance of safe behaviours. But public policies alone are not enough. Families and individuals must also be involved by having the right information to guide their choices about lifestyles and behaviours that promote their own health. Current global efforts to address Non-communicable diseases including diabetes focus mainly on prevention, control and surveillance. Those who have diabetes must get proper treatment and care. Strict control of blood sugar level, treatment of raised blood pressure, foot care, and eye care are such interventions which can substantially reduce the progression of the disease and its complications.

Strong emphasis must be given on the importance of affordable healthcare in preventing and managing chronic diseases among vulnerable populations. Coordinating with international partners, our effort must be to have a greater impact on diabetes prevention and management. I would suggest to explore options for more private-public partnership with the pharmaceutical industry.

Besides, research will help us to better understand the link between the socio-economic influences and higher risks of diabetes, so that we can develop more holistic approaches to diabetes prevention, and moreover, with this personalised medicine and digital health technologies are made more effective by sound policy decisions and awareness-raising campaigns.

You must consider empowering young people living with diabetes to become advocates for themselves and others living with diabetes

worldwide. The Young Leaders are committed to raising awareness of diabetes by being a voice for prevention, access to basic diabetes supplies and education, quality care, improved quality of life, and in ending discrimination. Your advocacy efforts will help in improving the lives of young people affected by diabetes.

I would like to congratulate the Society for its efforts in the fight against diabetes. I am sure it will continue to support diabetes research and innovation.

As so many issues relating to diabetes remain unclear to many people this conference has a lot to do. Your knowledge, experience and vision can help to change the future of people with diabetes and those at risk, and this Forum is expected to offer many possibilities and opportunities for you to have your say.

Over the next two days you will exchange ideas and identify concrete solutions to improve prevention, early detection and better management of diabetes. All of this will feed into the roadmap for the future of good practices for diabetes prevention and management. I hope the conference will be a landmark towards reducing the burden of diabetes in the State and in the country. It is said that managing diabetes is not a science for patients. To patients it is an art. The more ways you can help patients to help themselves, the better their quality of life will be. I sincerely hope that this conference will pave the way for concerted and more effective response to the health needs of people affected with diabetes, and herald a healthier future for generations to come.

With these words, I wish the conference all success.

Jai Hind.

ROLE OF MEDIA

Celebration of Access North East

It gives me immense pleasure to know that Access North East, an evening daily, from Delhi is being published and there is a provision for its concurrent publication from other big cities of India like Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Dehradun and Kolkata. Access North East aims to act as bridge between the North east and the rest of the country and, it will being news from different parts of North East to the rest of the country and the people living outside the country will be greatly benefited in ascertaining the news and the development of North East.

I take this opportunity to extend my hearty greetings and good wishes to all the members of Access North East family. I congratulate them for their unstinted commitment to run newspaper smoothly.

The pivotal role of newspapers' in the current scenario is of utmost significance right from nation building to progress and entertainment. Millions of people throughout the globe eagerly wait for newspapers every morning and evening. Newspapers disseminate not only news but also views, critical commentaries on the functioning of the government, different programmes, policies being implemented for the welfare of the people, the general way of living and day to day happenings, art and culture, sports etc. It is quire heartening to note that Access North East, the evening newspaper will propagate the aforementioned objectives and will strive to provide a window to the farthest corners of the region to those in the rest of the country who are interested in knowing the truth about this beautiful region.

Newspapers have undeniably a vital role to play and an important duty to perform, both as the voice of the people and builder of public opinion. Journalists should regard their profession as a noble mission for enlightening people, broadening their vision and discouraging sectarian, communal or other divisive trends. It is a pity that some newspapers fail to perform their duty towards the masses; most of whom still have an implicit belief in the printed word and tend

to take as truth to what they read or hear. They resort to sensationalism and even distortion of truth, but truth should be regarded as sacred.

Newspapers should remember their sacred duty and responsibility towards the society. Journalism is a noble profession which had its glorious history in India that dates back to the days of freedom struggle and a number of India's great men, intellectuals, political leaders, thinkers like Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and a stint in journalism. With such illustrious background, today's newspapers are required to perform its true role as guardian of public interest, and play a positive and constructive role expected of them in a large democracy like ours.

Vernacular newspapers are now wielding a lot of influence and are potent instruments of moulding public opinion. Gone are the days when they were struggling to survive and now they are thriving. It is good to see a number of newspapers, periodicals and journals are printed and published taking advantage of advances in printing technology. To provide readers with fresh news, newspapers are now having multiple editions.

Regional language newspapers have to act as real link between the people and the Government so that benefits of different programmes reach the desired section. They should not hesitate to expose corruption and misutilisation of funds, which are meant for the people but on the other hand appreciate the good work done by Government and implementing agencies and officials. This will give boost to their spirit. Here, I am reminded of the words of Gandhiji on newspapers. He said, "One of the objectives of a newspaper is to understand the popular feelings and give expression to it, another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments and the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects." So the newspapers have to be potent weapons at the hands of responsible people not only to contribute to the progress and prosperity but also to expose those who misuse their powers and resort to corruption in various ways.

In this modern age, when people are talking about and even anticipating whether the print media or newspaper can compete with electronic media, I do think differently. In their own capacity, they are supplementing to the needs of the people. They, in other words, help each other to grow. When there is challenge, you will find greater effort to overcome the challenge. With benefits of Information Technology and Internet, print media is fully geared to meet the challenge. It has its own unique appeal for readers.

A lot of positive things are happening in North East region everyday. But unfortunately North East gets mention only for negative stories. I hope and trust, Assess North East will project a balanced picture and bring the real vibrant North East to its readers carrying the flavor and scent from home and hearth of the communities nestled in bustling valleys and undulating hills of the region. Further culture, sports, education, health and every other thing that touches the lives and times of the people of the region may be exhaustively covered and a citizen's corner may be provided.

I am happy to know that the Central Government's "Look East Policy" promises to bring about economic rejuvenation of the North East in the coming years. Access North East may provide the required information which may help the Small and Medium Business Entrepreneurs to benefit from economic opportunities.

With these words, I am happy to be with you all in this eventful celebration and wish 'Access North East' all success in its endeavour to serve the people of India in general and North eastern states in particular.

Jai Hind.

National Council Meet – All India Small and Medium Newspaper

I am delighted to address the National Council Meet of All India Small and Medium Newspapers Federation organized by the Federation's Odisha State Branch. I understand that the Federation, established since 1961, is constantly striving for the uplift of small and medium newspapers in the country. It has regular representations in government media committees at the national and state levels and plays a pivotal role in media policy formulation in the country. I am told that the National Council Meet is part of the Federation's agenda of sharing information and to deliberate on the challenges before small and medium newspapers. I am sure the deliberations will provide constructive feedback for expansion of small and medium newspapers in terms of number and quality and act as agents of social change. I congratulate the Odisha State Branch for conducting such meets regularly.

We have a long history of print media in India from the time of Bengal Gazette in 1780. Today, the country enjoys the distinction of being one of the largest publishers of newspapers. Our linguistic diversity and literacy level resulted in having newspapers in a number of languages. The information revolution and the advent of modern printing technology have contributed a lot to the remarkable growth of newspapers in terms of size, content and number.

Small and medium newspapers serve a greater need of the nation. They understand local sensibilities better and their survival and growth is vital for the society. However, one often finds small and medium newspapers being criticized for ignoring ethical values. But it would be incorrect to generalize the statement. There are many small and medium newspapers who are admired and appreciated for reflecting ground realities accurately and presenting the correct picture before the readers or viewers. It is a matter of sticking to basics.

Small and medium newspapers not only need to survive but thrive independently. It is important to protect small and medium

newspaper houses and for that, I feel, financial viability and access to modern printing technology and infrastructure is essential. I am happy that the All India Small and Medium Newspapers Federation is committed to sort out various problems small and medium category newspapers face.

I understand that alongside the National Council Meet a seminar is also being organized with the theme "Freedom of the Press". Freedom of the press and journalistic ethics holds immense relevance today in India — with the word 'press' encompassing the electronic media as well. Taking into account the boom in media, its burgeoning presence and significant implications for basic human rights, I think there should be a serious discussion on the role and relevance of free press in the country,

The Indian Constitution extends the right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19 and, by proxy, to the press or media as well. However, even this provision in the Constitution comes with a clause wherein Article 19(2) states that reasonable restrictions can be placed on this right, in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the state, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence. Hence, freedom of the press is not an absolute freedom and the press is restricted from reporting an incident or expressing an idea that violates Article 19 (2).

Whatever we may think of the virtues and limitations of the press, it is obvious that it plays a very important part in our lives by way of making us aware and mobilizing public opinion. It is important that citizens are kept informed about what happens around them and elsewhere so that they can form rational opinions, which is necessary for the functioning of democracy. I see freedom of the press as an essential attribute of the democratic process.

The press should be efficient, fearless and impartial while reporting social issues or political evils like illiteracy, poverty, health, exploitation and corruption. It must bring truth to the public realm and let people know. The press should refrain from distorting news and

avoid sensationalism. It must ensure citizens' access to authentic sources of information. It must also believe in constructive criticism for any wrong - doing and at the same time appreciate the good work done. Only then will it win the respect of the people and perform its true role in a democracy. A free, vibrant and responsible press also has the potential to make the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary, three pillars of our Republic function smoothly and efficiently. After all, freedom of the press is our greatest strength and this strength comes from objectivity and accuracy.

It should be remembered that freedom always entails responsibility. Freedom and responsibility are the two sides of the same coin. There should be no misuse of freedom or else the whole credibility of and public faith in the press will be lost.

I am aware that threats and pressure are always there from misguided elements in our society. The fact that in the face of sustained and long term pressures, we still have a free and vibrant press or media in India is therefore all the more commendable. This is no mean achievement.

Our first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said and I quote, "The Press is one of the vital organs of modern life, especially in a democracy. The Press has tremendous powers and responsibilities. The Press must be respected and it must also have co-operation." He further said in a newspaper editors' conference in 1950, "I would rather have a completely free press with all the dangers involved in the wrong use of that freedom than a suppressed or regulated press."

Today there is a vigorous discussion on paid news where someone pays a newspaper and gets something favourable to him published. If this is true, it is most improper. Editors should not entertain this practice. I would further like to advise the owners of media houses be it newspapers or news channels to use journalism as a public trust for the benefit of people and as a vehicle for their aspirations. They should not use it for their personal glory and self-interest.

To conclude, I believe that the press must play a pivotal role in holding out the prospects of a better tomorrow. What it covers and how it chooses to cover events will determine the way we all advance. I therefore urge upon all those who are in the profession to uphold the ethics and maintain objectivity and commitment in the larger interest of the region, the state and the country. I am sure the efforts of the Federation as a trendsetter will continue to inspire new generations of journalists, make the future of small and medium newspapers brighter and achieve new glories. With these words, I wish a very productive and fruitful deliberation in the National Council Meet.

Jai Hind.

16th Foundation Day Function of Media Academy

I am happy to be with you on this 16th Foundation Day Celebration of Media Academy, Odisha that began its journey on an eventful day, the 8th of September, which is observed worldwide as 'International Literacy Day'. It is heartening to know that Media Academy is actively promoting both literacy and media literacy in society. I take this opportunity to extend my good wishes to teachers, students, staff, management and everyone contributes to the growth of this institution.

Every human being, every organisation is preparing for the future all the time since birth or inception. Some try to anticipate it, some prepare for every contingency, and most do a bit of both. One thing is for sure: the future is not going to be what it is supposed to be! In 1994, Peter Drucker, an Austrian-born American management consultant, educator, and author, wrote a seminal paper titled 'The Theory of Business'. He argued that every organisation is built and run on a set of assumptions about markets, customers, competitors, value perceptions and so on. When those assumptions are in harmony with the external reality there are conditions for growth and success. When there is a mismatch, the seeds of crisis are sown. The boom in the media sector, use of technology and its expansion have certainly put pressure on institutions grooming future media professionals to constantly remain alert to external reality and do what is essential for growth and success in this highly competition age of information.

Today we have many options of media for information and print media is certainly one of them. In India, we have a long and glorious tradition of print media as a medium of information and also of reflecting and moulding public opinion. It has been served by many illustrious persons like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at the national level and Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das, Sashi Bhusan Rath, Gouri Sankar Ray, Nilamani Vidyaratna, Dr. Hare Krushna Mahatab to name a few at the state level who have taken journalism to great

heights. Even today we have many bright minds serving the profession. They all continue to inspire present generation journalists.

However, there is a question that has been buzzing around since the rapid surge of the Internet and social media as to whether print media would survive. It is to be noted that right before World Wide Web took the world by storm, print media was the most reliable means of accessing news and information and till date it continues to be so. With the increase in the literacy rate, print media gets a strong foothold in the country. Its relevance and importance has not decreased, it has rather been enhanced considerably with the passage of time.

Millions of people across the country every day eagerly wait to have a look at the newspaper to get updated on the state of affairs in varied fields from politics, to economics, sports to entertainment. Print media remains the most affordable and basic source of information and news in the affordable means. Not only important information, but also others' viewpoints help people to sharpen their attitudes and intellect. Mahatma Gandhiji always believed that a newspaper is a social institution and that its success depends on the extent to which it could educate the readers. I am confident that print media benefitted by modern printing technology and easy access to the world of information continues to remain a vehicle of expression, education and enlightenment for all.

Coming to electronic media it has surely revolutionised the information system. Many TV channels justify the importance and advantage of electronic media. It is said that the institution which wins the media war will be the most successful. If we want to dominate in the world, we will have to accept the challenge of electronic media.

Whether it is print or electronic media it is important that the positive power of media be focused on and utilized for the real needs of the people, society and the nation. In a democracy it is the right and duty of the people to demand the benefit due from the media. The media in return should be aware of its responsibilities and should

ensure that its integrity is not sacrificed at the hands of commercialisation, pressure or temptation.

The rapid rise of new media and its technologies has heralded a new age in news reporting, dissemination of information as well as advertising. New media subscribes to the use of digital, computerized and networked information and communication technologies like Internet, computer multimedia and social media. Social networks are now the most discussed phenomenon globally. Facebook has achieved an astonishing reach and enviable levels of audience engagement, and Twitter has become a leading provider of bite-sized commentary and "breaking news" for many of its users. Every company that has customers is now using digital media to connect with them. Digital platforms have advantages and it is not just convenience and timeliness, but the enhanced interactive services and social connections, not to mention a rising generation of consumers that has no legacy of print media.

The traditional media industry is pushed to face great challenges due to the high speed of Information and Communication Technology developed media operation, and change of perception of readers / audience. I agree that there are challenges ahead for traditional media as readers and revenues migrate to digital platforms.

This fast evolving phenomenon has no doubt shifted the media landscape into a world of increased communication channels and interactivity. Understanding the new media landscape and optimising its functions are therefore essential in achieving success. The use of new media technology is growing and changing every day, and it is imperative that media houses as well as job-seekers recognize and embrace these new mediums to their advantage.

Social media cannot replace print media that has a long and glorious tradition or even electronic media. Print media will never die and it will continue to preserve its unique identity, reach and thrive. Both will complement one another for the good of society.

Media's influence on shaping the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes is enormous. It is unquestionable that mass media, whether

print or electronic or social, exert a significant impact on the way we understand, interpret and act on our world. While communications systems and information flows become increasingly central components of social, economic and political activity at all levels, media education, or media literacy continues to retain its edge.

Exposed on a daily basis to the whirlwind of social media, many young boys and girls are now opting for a career in media. It is a healthy development as they will further strengthen our democratic system of governance.

I would like to suggest that the Media Academy may evolve a plan to help them develop their critical thinking and media skills needed to compete fully and successfully in the 21st century media culture. The ultimate goal is to enhance their potential for achieving the optimum social good. On this occasion I would prefer to give a few tips to the young students about the professional life that unfolds before them.

As a media professional, one should be wise and judicious enough to differentiate the good from the bad, the true from the false and never mix news with views because by doing so you will be doing a disservice to the profession and shielding the truth.

Next, I want you to be a believer in doing and have intelligence and courage to make what you do perfect. Always remember that there is no substitute to hard work, endeavour and action in enhancing prosperity and wealth. It is easier to know what needs to be done than actually doing it. Everybody knows how to solve the problem, but the endeavour and action required to implement solutions is missing. It takes intelligence to think differently, but it takes courage to act on that intelligence.

Thirdly, never allow yourselves to be overwhelmed by your success. All of us work diligently and hard in order to achieve success and gain satisfaction. But it is quite often the case that once we have attained success and satisfaction, we do not know what to do with them. The question then arises : should all of us be working for

satisfaction or with satisfaction? Satisfaction is not the goal of our journey, it is our companion.

Fourth, always stick to your moral and ethical values. It is true that the career of media professional can be very stressful. During one's career one will face problems and the solutions to the same often lie in moral science. One needs to resolve moral and ethical issues squarely and on one's own by himself. Once you slip against your own ethical values, the descent is rapid.

Media is termed the 'Fourth Pillar' of our democratic polity and they are the watchdog of our democracy. The more media persons are strong and unbiased in their reporting, the stronger will be the roots of our democracy. Media derive its rights to free speech and expression because it does a service to society. This freedom should be enjoyed with a sense of responsibility and not abused or else others will raise fingers at the profession.

I always want our students to feel proud of coming to a profession, which has been served earlier by many illustrious persons. They should uphold its dignity. The state and the nation expect a lot from them. I wish all of them the very best in life.

I am happy that the Media Academy consisting of experts in the field of journalism, education and administration is promoting journalistic ethics among future media professionals. Besides this, the Academy has taken up worthy causes like the propagation of Odisha's art and culture, fight against social evils and also it honours eminent personalities in recognition of their notable contributions.

As the Media Academy celebrates its 16th Foundation Day I expect the Academy to renew its purpose by redefining its focus to deal creative's with new and emerging external realities. I wish the Academy all success.

Jai Hind.

Valedictory Session of the Kalinga Television's First Colloquium – 2015

It is my pleasure to be with you all this evening at the valedictory session of the first 'Colloquium' of Kalinga Television. I understand that today is the first day of public telecast of this newly launched 24 hours News Channel from the bouquet of KIIT Group. The occasion is surely memorable.

Media plays an important role in defining public perception of events, culture, debates and discussions and opening the telecast of Kalinga Television with a day-long panel discussion inviting eminent persons different fields from across the country is indeed laudable.

A panel discussion usually offers viewers the opportunity to hear several learned people on a specific issue. The discussion enlightens the audience in regard to the intricacies of the issue or topic as discussed. I am sure today's effort of Kalinga Television would be appreciated.

I congratulate the founder Dr. Achyuta Samanta and others of Kalinga Media and Entertainment Private Limited for launching Kalinga Television, a 24/7 News Channel. It is heartening that the channel promises viewers of positive news and positive activities of the society in the interest of Odisha.

The electronic media is now in full bloom. We are living in an era where there are as many news channels as music or entertainment channels. The recent craze is for 24/7 news channels which telecast news at different timings in different languages and styles on numerous TV channels dedicated to news reporting.

We are all aware of globalization and globalisation of media is not a new phenomenon. Combined with other social factors it is increasingly a significant characteristic of citizens' communicative relationships. The cultural repertoire has been extended because of globalization of media. Satellite television and Internet provide a mixture of music, drama, news, talk shows, information, current affairs etc. It has become possible to maintain or revive a sense of belonging

to a culture and society that in geographical terms is far away, but that due to electronic media has achieved a new presence and immediacy in everyday life. This belonging through transnational media connections has been invigorated.

In both scholarly work and public debate on globalization, the influence of media and particularly electronic media on social change is considered to be of prime importance. In sociological and cultural analyses of globalization, media such as satellite television, the Internet, computers, mobile phones etc. are often thought to be among the primary forces behind current restructurations of social and cultural geography. Electronic media facilitate an increased interconnectedness across vast distances. Furthermore, a handful of media enterprises and media moguls such as Rupert Murdoch, and Bill Gates have become icons of globalization. These media companies and actors both have ambitions of global market domination and serve as the messengers of a new global era. Particularly the transnational news services with a global or regional reach, such as CNN, BBC World, and Star News, have come to be regarded as the town criers of the global village. Their continuous, on-line, and live distribution of news to all corners of the world has become emblematic of a world in which place and time mean less and less.

A series of international events bear witness to the transnationalization of the public sphere and public opinion formation. It can be argued that because of global communication, the public and its opinion is no longer a substantial element of the political system of a society but has turned into a more or less autonomous global public sphere which can only be considered not as a space between the 'public' and the 'state' but between the state and an extra-societal, global community.

However, the challenge is to make transnational news media more orientated toward and accountable to national and local public spheres, while keeping national and local media orientated toward and responsible to the agenda of the outside world. The presence of transnational news services in national newsrooms may not generally

influence the editorial choice in terms of concrete stories, but it may provide an inspiration for a gradual change in editorial policies.

Mushrooming of news channels sometimes affects the credibility and ethics of reporting. When there is a cut-throat competition in the Indian media, it is the credibility which is the ultimate winner and makes the difference. Credibility not only affects the information about the news but also affects the way viewers' perception of the news channel.

News channels need to be aware of the factors that affect their credibility in the eyes of the viewers and there should be a continuous effort to improve them. This would be really beneficial for news media outlets particularly because they are getting tough competition from "Social Media". And it is not surprising that credibility associated with social media is regarded very high by the fans of social media.

It takes a lot to build credibility and very little to destroy it. Thus the focused priority for any news product such as a news channel or a newspaper is to safeguard its credibility. Often a few channels may resort to sensationalism in order to boost viewership. However, this strategy is not sustainable. Most media companies have already made their choice, whether they want to be credible and accurate or try and get quick eyeballs through sensationalism. However, one cannot forget the fact that "viewers are intelligent and perceptive enough to know the difference".

Today's viewers know exactly what they want and secondly, they have a choice of too many news channels. Hence, adding a bit of sensation and dramatization may add to the net acceptance of a news channel but overdoing the same to an extent where reality gets overshadowed is not to be a long lasting strategy. Interestingly, even the regular viewers of a particular channel acknowledge that it has its own political and other preferences and some are perceived to be highly dramatized as compared to other news channels.

The basic aim of the media is to make the citizens aware of the various developments, government policies, useful and relevant public information, and also what is not going well in the State and in the

country. Odisha is a State with immense possibilities and potential. The State has a rich culture and tradition and it is endowed with significant natural resources. But the question that unsettles every conscious citizen is why Odisha still remains backward. Odisha is now very much determined to rewrite its destiny and the role of a news channel assumes much importance in sensitization of the people and protection of interest of the State and the Nation.

Looking at the positive side and promoting positive attitude has its own benefits. When positive attitudes meet with faith, courage, consistency and perseverance, miracles tend to happen. Every opportunity has a difficulty and every difficulty has an opportunity. Instead of letting challenges overwhelm us and instead of letting the negativity of the world get us down, it is time to turn them into opportunities with positive attitude and with an optimistic mind. If life knocks you down, get back up with a stronger positive attitude and show it why you weren't born to fail or surrender. It can be concluded that believing in negative thoughts is the single greatest obstruction to success. A positive attitude may not solve all our problems but that is the only option we have if we want to get out of problems.

Let me quote the former US President John F. Kennedy's famous 1961 inauguration speech after his swearing-in ceremony where he urged people to participate in public service and "ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country". It is important that people should not ask "what is happening to me" but they should ask "what is happening to us". I appreciate the Kalinga Television's commitment and focus on promoting positive activities in society to inspire for achieving larger goals.

It is heartening that news channels are becoming bigger and better, in terms of content and technological brilliance. But it is time for News Channels for a reality check. I am happy that Kalinga Television aims to be a youthful and vibrant channel targeting all sections of people and the all-round development and progress of the State. I urge upon the channel to design and produce programmes to cover the entire spectrum of Odisha's development and its potential

and splendour. I hope viewers can see the best of what is going on in and around State and Nation. May Kalinga Television captivate the audience by distilling the essence of Odisha by skillfully programming the passion, emotion and life of the land and its people while being rooted to in-depth and responsible reporting and bringing news items that matter the most to the people. With these words, I wish Kalinga Television all success.

Jai Hind.

Programme of Humane Aspect – A Times of India Initiative

I am happy to be in your midst in this programme, "The Human Aspect – A Times of India Initiative." This is a programme that aims at recognizing and felicitating the organizations, mainly in the public sector. The organizations which have made outstanding contributions towards the welfare of the community in particular and society in general are felicitated. Today we honour some organizations which have become part and parcel of our existence after India's Independence. Steel Authority of India, Rourkela Steel Plant and Mahanadi Coalfields Limited at national level and Odisha Mining Corporation in Odisha is well-known for their relentless efforts to meet various challenges of the nation. Today we also felicitate Gupta Power Infra Ltd. That these organizations have taken their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities seriously is evident.

The Times of India, as a newspaper and as an institution, has become part and parcel of our times for more than one hundred and fifty years. In modern times, this newspaper has transformed itself into a refreshing storehouse of information, entertainment, education, health and what not. My college days were in Calcutta and those days in late 1940s, we received The Times a bit late, but then that had never been an issue with any Times-lover anywhere! I do not exactly remember when I had fallen in love with it, but then the affair has sustained for more than six decades! Then when I began my political journey in early 19 sixties with the first Prime Minister of India Pandit Nehru, there was no way we could afford the luxury of skipping The Times of India! Because, no one even knew when there would be appreciations or when there would be rejection. Then there was "You Said It" by R.K Laxman. In later stages of my life, I had the good fortune of knowing some of its illustrious editors. However, old timers like me are sad because the famed literary pieces on its pages are not there. Anyway that may be the call of the hour. It is indeed highly

commendable that this legendary newspaper has associated itself with a number of socio-cultural-literary activities.

Today's programme "The Humane Aspect" is an initiative of the Times of India. It is a unique way of encouraging those private and public sector organizations which have contributed significantly to CSR oriented activities, and then inspiring those who have either not made CSR activity part and parcel of their ethics or have been making insignificant contributions! This initiative of the Times of India will go a long way in spreading awareness on the subject.

For me, CSR is all-inclusive and all-pervasive. The phrase "Social responsibility" has much wider connotation than is legally attributed to it. The word 'social' might be tempting for some organizations to mean society in general and thereby channelizing their "responsibility" towards welfare of society. Now a days, a whole lot of activities are being taken up by Corporates. The bigger the corporate, people expect bigger contribution. Let me tell you that I belong to Nagaland, a small state of course; but a state with Nature's bounteous blessings. So growing up in a surrounding where nature played hide and seek with us had its influence on us. And I am taking my audience here down my memory lane to late 1930s and early 1940s! Those days Nagaland fascinated one and all by her pristine beauty. From an early age, we were taught by elders that our society was not limited to humans only, nor it meant our own tribal brethren! Society, in all practical sense, meant our neighbours, fellow tribesmen; and hold your breath, our domesticated animals like cows, buffalos etc. and then there were many varieties of colourful birds! These animals, birds and other animals were like members of one extended family. And finally, our river and rivulets and some specific herbs with medicinal values were also highly respected members of that family. It was not a singular case of Nagaland; wherever the tribal people lived, all others coexisted with them. This is as true in the Indian context as it is in African or South American context.

I say all these because plan and policy makers, private as well as public sector, scientists and environmentalists and more importantly

the local people should come on a single platform before any activity of industrialization or mining or power generation is undertaken in any area. CSR activity should begin in right earnest in the area from the moment the organization sets foot there. Thereafter, it should be intensified as the work progresses. Never for once, the industrial, mining, manufacturing, power and infrastructure sector should neglect the rivers, rivulets, birds, forest animals, forest and the local inhabitants. Neither can these activities of progress and development be stopped. The key to the answer lies in our sincere effort to strike the right balance between the two. There should be love, respect and concern for the ecosystem, nature in general. Mindless exploitation of nature and its resources take us nowhere, and if it takes anywhere then it leads to irreparable damage. How can civilization sustain and survive if we pollute and destroy air, water, land and forest; the very elements that have sustained us and made our survival possible for thousands of years?

Yes- setting up schools and colleges is good CSR activity. Yes, providing incentives to brilliant students and sportspersons is good CSR activity. There are many other such activities. However, setting up a quality educational institution but simultaneously causing damage to a local river or lake is not an example of good CSR activity. Giving employment to 10/15 family members of displaced families is indeed highly commendable, but what good is it if the nearby forest is destroyed? This is where the real challenge is. I am sure all these and various other dimensions of CSR are taken care of by the esteemed captains of public sector present here. More than hundred years ago, when activities of infrastructure building and industrialization were being intensified in the United States of America; land grabbing, encroachment and needless buying of land had worried many. Famous novelist Mark Twain had once sarcastically remarked, "Buy land, they are not making it anymore!" The bottom-line is land, or for that matter, air and water should not be needlessly exploited or wasted or destroyed because we cannot manufacture them in factories.

However, it is heartening that our PSUs and some in the private sector have an excellent track record when it comes to quality CSR activities. Many other display an attitude of disrespect to nature. The challenge lies in reining in the violators. Civil society can join hand with the law enforcing authorities to ensure that small or medium or big organizations in their areas adhere to good CSR practice.

I am aware that our PSUs have already set very high standards in CSR activity; some of which are felicitated today. I hope this will inspire others to emulate the best CSR practices. The Times of India deserves our appreciation for such an initiative. I commend the efforts of Rourkela Steel Plant, Mahanadi Coalfields Limited, Odisha Mining Corporation and Gupta Power and hope they will set standards that others elsewhere would love to emulate.

Jai Hind.

GREAT STATESMEN

Observance of 22nd Death Anniversary of Former Prime Minister Late Rajiv Gandhi

Today the whole nation pays homage to former Prime Minister Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi on his 22nd death anniversary. The day is marked with several programmes organised countrywide to make people know more about this illustrious son of the country and to draw inspiration from his life and deeds so as to contribute to the great task of nation-building.

I understand that the Rajiv Gandhi Forum, Odisha State, like previous years has organised this State Level Function to observe the death anniversary of late Rajiv Gandhiji along with a National Seminar in order to highlight Rajivji's contribution to nation building. Besides this, it is also honouring eminent persons for their outstanding contributions in different fields with the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award. Sadbhavana or harmony is vital to make India united, stronger and prosperious. Rajivji understood it very well in his life and led the nation in the quest of harmony, tolerance and good will among our people. I am sure the awardees will continue to work hard for the welfare of humanity and towards promoting peace and harmony in society.

Late Rajiv Gandhiji, the youngest ever Prime Minister of India was a great visionary whose thinking was much ahead of his time. He emerged as a man of indomitable courage, conviction and determination belying his age and endeared himself to all with his vision even at the global level and more importantly to the youths of the country with his charismatic personality for whom he continues to be their idol.

On a personal note, I had the privilege of knowing Raivji from very close quarters. Rajivji with his lovable character earned respect cutting across party lines. He belonged to those statesmen who achieved immortality by their great work. Rajivji stood out with his vision of India and was fittingly conferred with the highest civilian honour of the country, Bharat Ratna.

The theme of the Seminar is "Contribution of Rajiv Gandhi towards reconstruction of India Today. Rajivji had a dream of making India strong, independent, self-reliant and in the front rank of the nations of the world. He had said,'"I would like to be remembered as having brought India into the 21st Century parallel with the most advanced countries in the world, out of the branding of India as a developing country to the status of the developed nation."

Rajiv Gandhi had endlessly endeavoured to make India a progressive nation. He always believed that people at the grassroots should be the master of their destiny and must have a say in their development. In order to ensure better participation and realise Mahatma Gandhiji's dream of Gram Swarajya, Rajivji was the one who was credited with initiating the process of devolution of power to the people and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) which later took shape in the form of 73rd and 74th amendments of the Constitution. These amendments are indeed historic. What is more impressive is that it led to greater participation of women at the grassroots in decision making process. Rajivji firmly believed that empowered women and youth can play a meaningful role in taking the country ahead.

Rajivji had a special love and affection for the youth of the country. He used to say "I am young and I too have a dream. I dream of an India, strong, independent, self reliant and in the front rank of the nations of the world in the service of mankind. I am committed to realising that dream through dedication, hard work and collective determination of our people". National Youth Policy in 1985 heralding advent of technological revolution and lowering of voting age from 21 to 18 are noteworthy initiatives of Rajivji as it paved way for grooming the future leaders of the country.

Youth constitute a sizeable portion of India's population. Transforming India into a developed nation depends upon the ways in which youth are moulded and motivated to act as a committed and constructive force for positive change and nation building. Let our youth ride on the foundation laid by Rajivji and make them a potent force in nation building and realise his unfulfilled dreams.

Rajivji understood the importance of education and he believed that it is the gateway to achieve equality and create strong human resource to take India on the path of progress and prosperity. Opening of Navodaya Vidyalayas and Indira Gandhi Open University by Rajivji have truly revolutionised the education sector and are termed as major milestones.

Rajivji did all he could, to implement reforms and to restore communal peace and harmony. He stgrove to give India an image of modernity and provided momentum in the field of rural development, science and technology, telecommunication, IT, sports and games, poverty alleviation and removal of regional imbalances to cite only a few initiatives, so as to achieve rapid progress and help India enter the new millennium riding high on its economic growth, vibrant democracy and sound social fabric.

Today our country has established itself as IT superpower in the world. Because of advancement in computer and communication sector it becomes easy to have access to the world of information. Now Government is taking all steps to ensure that people even in rural areas get the benefits of information and communication revolution. Rajivji's role in putting India on the track of modern development and progress can never be forgotten.

Rajivjis endeavour to find new paths to the future made him popular among millions of Indians of all age. Today, when we remember him on his death anniversary, let us come and work together burying all differences to realise his unfulfilled dream and let us draw inspiration from his lofty ideas and ideals in building a developed and strong India. With these words, I once again pay my rich tribute to Rajivji and also wish Rajiv Gandhi Forum, Odisha all success in its endeavour to spread the message of Rajivji all over the state.

Jai Hind.

National Symposium on the Life & Works of Late Smt. Indira Gandhi

I deem it a great privilege to be invited to offer my humble tributes to our beloved former Prime Minister Bharat Ratna late Shrimati Indira Gandhiji in the hallowed premises of Teen Murti Bhavan, the venue for this National Symposium organized by National Integration & Economic Council on the occasion of Indiraji's 96th Birth Anniversary. Teen Murti Bhavan is a historic monument, as you all know, it was the official residence of the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in Delhi. On a personal note, I have a very special emotional attachment to Teen Murti Bhavan because of many unforgettable events. I used to come here frequently in the capacity of Parliamentary Secretary to Pandit Nehru and got the opportunity to meet and discuss with Indiraji on several occasions. I vividly recall the joyous memories of her great personality who shaped the destiny of India in turbulent times and carved a niche in the annals of history. Visits to Teen Murti Bhavan I cherish for ever as among the most precious moments of my life. I am thankful to the organizers for giving me another opportunity to come here again and renew my association with this historic Teen Murti Bhavan.

Evaluation of a personality of Indiraji's stature and dimensions within an allotted time is never an easy task. Her muti-faceted personality and charm, could perhaps never be captured in pen or in words. However, I would make a modest attempt to touch several important events of Indiraji's life and her deeds that made her one of the most charismatic leaders of the last century.

It was the pre-independence era when Anand Bhawan at Allahabad was famous as the House of Nehru family and the Headquarters of the country's freedom movement. Born to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Kamala Nehru on November 19, 1917 in Anand Bhawan, Indiraji had not enjoyed a fun-filled childhood. She had to be separated frequently from her imprisoned parents and remained entirely alone. Her beloved mother's prolonged illness and premature death added to her tribulations and enduring loneliness. However, it was this loneliness

that fostered inner strength and she learned to be self-reliant and tough. According to her biographers, Indiraji seemed to realize right from the beginning that important things were happening outside her lonely little world in Anand Bhawan and learnt to be by herself most of the time. Throughout her youth she was exposed to the discourse of nation building. She participated in the freedom movement, working within the Congress party's youth wing. Courage and patriotism came to her early, inspired by the conduct of her own family members in the struggle for freedom. The letters that she exchanged with her father, Pandit Nehruji while he was in prison, reveal the deep intellectual and historical understanding of India that she absorbed and lived. Her education from Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's Shantiniketan to Switzerland and Oxford in England gave her a broad based international perspective and exposure.

With this background she came into politics and she adorned the post of President of Indian National Congress and left her indelible imprints of her leadership skill as she led the party from the front with great distinction. She was inducted into the Ministry of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri as Minister for Information and Broadcasting. Steps she had taken to improve the system are still rated as path breaking and these led to new ventures in later period.

Indira Gandhi dominated Indian politics for nearly two decades and she remained at the helm of the political stage exuding charm and elegance, her graceful presence filling the entire arena. Though she was reputed to be cool, calculated and tough she was really humane and caring, full of vitality and self-confidence. Her deep concern for the welfare of the down-trodden and deprived and commitment for upliftment of the poor and weak and for her perpetual gratitude from the teeming multitudes stood the test of the times. Massive economic programmes like abolition of privy purses and nationalization of banks ensured social justice in the true sense of the term and determined the parameters of social transformation. Nationalisation of banks were meant for boosting Indian economy and making banking easy and accessible in rural and urban areas as well.

Keeping India together, notwithstanding diversities of religion, language, caste, creed, race and culture, was her primary task. She was untiring in her endeavour for the unity and integrity of the nation. Her exemplary life of courage and dedication is a lesson of historical importance for both present and future generations.

When she became the first woman Prime Minister of India in the late Sixties it was not that smooth sailing for her and she had to confront many major challenges from inside like lack of self sufficiency in food production, not so sound financial situation, wrath of natural calamities etc. Indiraji with her inbuilt toughness and courage took on all these challenges head on. This led her to be known as "Iron Lady of India". Her dynamic leadership saw India evolve and grow and she was determined that India, instead of taking pride of her past glory is destined for greatness. Throughout her life Indiraji had no doubt understood where her priorities lay. She took many strong decisions that changed the face of the nation and sometimes tough decisions as well in the larger interest of the country. Her decision to launch green revolution to combat acute food scarcity prevailing at the time was truly remarkable. It was under her governance, India's agricultural output yielded surplus crop leaving behind the drought conditions. During her tenure, India made tremendous progress in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, space mission and research, ocean development and other frontiers of science and technology. She was instrumental in India sending its first expedition to Antarctica.

Besides her unflinching courage and astute leadership, Indiraji is also admired for championing the cause of removal of poverty and social justice to build a strong and progressive India. She had deep and genuine concern for the poor and downtrodden. At the heart of her policies and programmes was a passionate resolve to raise people out of poverty and enable them to live with dignity. Her famous call for "Garibi Hatao" (Remove Poverty) brought about material change in the attitude and behaviour of the people. Indiraji was also equally concerned for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes and other weaker sections and took several steps for their social, economic and cultural

betterment. We cannot let these classes feel that they are separated from the mainstream of society. We must ensure that they are benefitted from government programmes meant for them.

Indiraji was instrumental in expediting and enlarging land reforms that made millions of tenants and landless labourers the owner of the land they tilled, on which they produce grain and cash crops improving their own economic condition and at the same time contributing to the nation's effort of achieving food self sufficiency. Today the country has achieved self sufficiency in food grains, a result of the technological transformation of our agriculture and green revolution.

Another area where Indiraji concentrated more is on women and children. What she had initiated and did for women and children especially of lower strata is well known. She was convinced that children need greater care in terms of education and health for a secured and bright future of India. She was the backbone behind implementation of "White Revolution", which was started to combat malnutrition amongst children. Mother and child care is one of the focused areas of her government which later governments followed with vigour in their programmes.

Another notable feature of Indiraji's life is that she was a staunch protagonist of the secular ideals of the Constitution and worked tirelessly for the social and economic advancement of the minorities. Her abiding concern for their all round welfare was demonstrated in the special government measures taken during her period for safeguarding their religious, cultural and educational rights and for expanding employment opportunities for them. She carried the message of unity, communal harmony and national integration to every nook and corner of the country. Her approach to reach out to masses directly in a country of India's size and diversity has few parallels.

Indiraji devoted a great deal of time to the welfare of the youth. She encouraged Indian youth to excel in every field and bring laurels and make India proud. Her unstinted support and patronage to conserve and promote India's rich art and culture, music and dance deserve special mention. Her commitment was profound. Here I can say that there was hardly any sphere of creative activity whether political, economic, cultural

or scientific, in which she did not have any interest and to which she did not contribute.

Indiraji followed his illustrious father and put all her knowledge and outlook to enhance India's diplomatic relations with other countries and its status at the global level. India under her leadership played a constructive role in the global affairs especially in Non Aligned Movement. Her foreign policy contributed to India's emergence as a major regional power. Her foreign policy and diplomacy also made her one of the front ranking statesmen of the world. Her great qualities of statesmanship were recognized even by the staunch adversaries. Henry Kissinger eloquently complimented by saying and I quote, "balancing the super-powers against one another requires extraordinary skills and Indira Gandhi accomplished these with greater skill. She had a clear view of how to hold India together and she did what was necessary." She championed the cause of peace and disarmament at the international forums. Though she was advocating the cause of peace yet she did not accept the aggression from Pakistan, but retaliated in strong measures and handed a humiliating defeat to Pakistan. This victory eventually led to the creation of the new and independent nation of Bangladesh.

Indiraji's vision of a country of self-reliant and dynamic economy, a progressive outlook and scientific temper found concrete expression in the rapid strides made by agriculture, industry and science and technology. While striving to build a united India she had never lost sight of Indian values which rather gave her immense strength to succeed in her mission. Her strong impulse of modernization led to provide a wide base for development of infrastructure. Today we are reaping benefits from her foresight and deeds.

Indiraji wears the hallow of a great martyr. Her martyrdom demonstrated her commitment to national unity and solidarity and it is unparalleled. Whatever she did or thought was for a united and strong India. Indiraji is an apostle of national integration and truly we celebrate her birth anniversary as National Integration Day. Here I have a concern. Recent communal clashes have been quite disturbing for the whole country. Incidents of communal hatred are against the social fabric of this

great country. Inspite of our efforts, communal incidents and clashes are showing their ugly faces and ruining our peaceful co-existence. We should not let the sacrifice of Indiraji go waste and introspect deeply to realize her dream. Certainly the communal forces are big challenges to our democratic fabric. It is necessary for all of us to keep these forces away and maintain the spirit of structure of peaceful co-existence and ensure cordial relations among various communities. The diversities constitute our greatest national strength. Here, it is appropriate to quote Indiraji's own words. She said, "It is customary for people to think of diversity as a disadvantage and therefore to seek to impose uniformity in the search for unity and strength. In India we have found that diversity is a source of strength, that the continuity of the Indian civilization for thirty centuries is itself due to its diversity, to its talent for observing new elements and tolerating differences." We should not allow anyone to play spoilsport to this spirit of national wellbeing.

Lastly, let me quote those memorable words from Indiraji's last public address at Bhubaneswar on October 30, 1984 and she had said, "I am alive today. I may not be there tomorrow. I shall continue to serve till my last breath and when I die, every drop of my blood will strengthen India and keep a united India alive." These final words carry significant meaning for every Indian. Let us be united, take pride of being Indian and build a strong India.

With these words, I once again express thanks to the organizers for giving me this opportunity to share my views on this occasion. I wish the endeavours of National Integration and Economic Council all success.

Jai Hind.

Hukumat Day Celebration organized by Netaji Subash Bose INA Trust

It is indeed a privilege for me to be here for the Hukumat Day celebration organized by Netaji Subhash Bose-INA Trust in the memory of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. The occasion holds very special feeling for me because INA traversed through my native State Nagaland on its historic campaign to Delhi on the clarion call given by Subhas Chandra Bose. Subhas Chandra Bose and his INA became household names throughout the country for the way the patriotic passion was evoked. The patriotic fervour of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is a source of inspiration for people struggling across the globe for the cause of the motherland. I have grown up with Netaji's patriotic zeal and people of North East always hold him with high esteem. Besides this, I am very happy that the commemoration of Netaji's famous Delhi Chalo call gives me an opportunity to visit this hallowed institution where Netaji had his schooling and where his mind was shaped on nationalistic cause. Celebrating this historic occasion on the premises of the Ravenshaw Collegiate School in Cuttack is certainly appropriate and I congratulate the organizers for this initiative.

The Hukumat Divas, is observed to commemorate Netaji's clarion call 'Delhi Chalo' at Singapore on October 21, 1943. Today we are commemorating this historic slogan that evoked a huge response. Slogans in pre-independence period were reminiscent of the great themes like Purna Swaraj, Quit India, 'Do or Die' and 'Delhi Chalo'. A slogan is successful when it is able to tap the collective consciousness of a people and raises mass enthusiasm to a cause. Seen in this perspective, Purna Swaraj, Quit India or Delhi Chalo touched a sensitive chord as every Indian wanted to be free from British Rule. Like these slogans, Netaji's great tribute to the nation, 'Jai Hind.' was also equally evocative.

India's freedom movement was a spontaneous movement of the masses and great leaders with fierce patriotism and lofty visionary ideas sacrificed their entire lives for the nation's cause. Subhas

Chandra Bose is a towering figure of the Indian independence movement. He is best known for his unflinching zeal and determination for an armed struggle for Indian independence against the mighty British Empire.

Born on 23rdJanuary, 1897 in Cuttack to advocate Janakinath Bose, and Prabhavati Devi, Subhas Chandra Bose studied in this Ravenshaw Collegiate School. The then Headmaster Beni Madhab Das discovered the brilliance and fervent patriotism in his early days. A brilliant student throughout his career, he topped the matriculation examination of Calcutta province. He completed his graduation from Scottish Church College, my alma mater. He also qualified for the prestigious Indian Civil Service (ICS) Examination securing fourth position but never joined it being deeply disturbed by the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre. A fiery nationalist he did not want to serve under the British regime. The letter he wrote to his elder brother Sarat Chandra Bose on resigning from the Indian Civil Service in 1921 illustrates his firm conviction, "Only on the soil of sacrifice and suffering can we raise our national edifice".

He had strong inspiration from Swami Vivekananda's teachings, from Mahatma Gandhi and Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das whom he acknowledged as his political guru. He was frank in his anti-British stance and was jailed 11 times between 1920 and 1941 for periods varying between six months and three years.

Widely known as Netaji, Subhas Chandra Bose advocated complete freedom for India through every available means. He attempted to secure Indian independence during World War II with the help of Nazi Germany and Japan. As founder and Head of State of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India) and Azad Hind Fauz, he galvanized his entire nation through his fierce nationalism.

Netaji was of the view that the Provisional Government of Azad Hind had to be formed before the army could be sent for action in the battlefield. The Provisional Government was officially proclaimed in Singapore at a mass rally on 21st October 1943 where Netaji was unanimously elected as the Head of the State of his

Government-in-exile and the Supreme Commander of the Indian National Army and while taking the oath he said:

"In the name of God, I take this sacred oath that to liberate India and the three hundred eighty million of my countrymen, I, Subhas Chandra Bose, will continue the sacred war of freedom till the last breath of my life. I shall remain always a servant of India, and to look after the welfare of three hundred eighty million of Indian brothers and sisters shall be for me my highest duty. Even after winning freedom, I will always be prepared to shed even the last drop of my blood for the preservation of India's freedom".

Netaji had great drive and charisma and the INA under Subhas Bose was truly an embodiment of national unity. It was a model of diversity by region, ethnicity, religion, and even gender. The formation of a women's brigade within the INA, and naming it "Rani of Jhansi Regiment," after the celebrated queen of Jhansi, Laxmibai, Netaji found no difference between man and woman when it is the cause of fighting for the Motherland. Coincidentally, another Laxmi, Lieutenant-Col. Laxmi, was placed in charge of this regiment by Netaji. It is heartening that Odisha had also representation in INA.

People of India continued to be so much captivated of Netaji's spell-binding oratory, astute leadership qualities, dauntless determination and mysterious adventures, tha he became a legend. The famous Red Fort trial wherein his generals and the INA officers were tried, became landmark events. The trial witnessed people cutting across political and communal barriers came onto streets in defence of the INA prisoners and that put pressure on the British to expedite the transfer of power.

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's clarion war cry "Delhi Chalo" is still relevant in several ways. Spreading a fervor of national harmony and unity, Indian revolutionary Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, envisioned a globally resilient and strong India. While Netaji's approach to Indian freedom continues to generate debate in the Indian society today, there is no denying of his robust patriotism, his tireless

efforts to free India from bondage and his reckless adventures in trying to reach his gc als.

Let me conclude with another flurry of lofty words that he said, "One individual may die for an idea; but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheel of evolution moves on and the ideas and dreams of one nation are bequeathed to the next." Netaji lives on eternally in every Indian mind. Let Subhash Chandra Bose's life continue to be a beacon to all Indians, lighting up the path they follow.

With these words, I once again express my deep pleasure in attending this celebration of Netaji's celebrated war cry "Delhi Chalo".

Jai Hind.

Birth Centenary Celebration of Former Chief Minister Late Biju Patnaik

It is a unique opportunity for me to participate in the birth centenary celebration of an illustrious son of Odisha, late Biju Patnaik. Today I join the people of the State in paying homage to the legendary leader in this state level function.

To merely exist and be around is never what is significant in life. It is what one contributes to the building and development of the world, how one helps to change the world for the better and what difference one has made to the lives of others that ultimately count and that determine the significance of the life. Whether in the life of an individual, an organisation or an institution the significance of life is measured by what one leaves behind as a legacy, no matter how small or big, how well known or little known. Life of Biju Babu as a freedom fighter, a patriot, a nationalist, a leader and a statesman of national and international repute is a shining example. He was a man whose every deed speaks of his leadership, vision and courage. He holds a very special place in the hearts of the people of the State. He had the unique distinction of being honoured with the highest civilian award of a foreign country. The State today proudly remembers this illustrious son of Odisha.

Remembering late Biju Patnaik through lens of Time makes me elated as I am driven down the memory lane to the Sixties when I came across a charismatic and dynamic leader from Odisha in the office of the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Biju Babu was by then known as a fearless nationalist who displayed remarkable courage be it during Quit India Movement or in his daredevil Indonesian expedition. His splendid vision of an industrialized Odisha endeared him to Pandit Nehru and this proved to be a great blessing for Odisha's progress and development. It is said- the first impression lasts long and the same thing happened with me on Biju Babu. Since I was young then I was overwhelmed by his passion and commitment for the national cause.

It may be said that Biju Babu's personality epitomized a number of sterling qualities like extraordinary imagination, dauntless courage, and tenacity of purpose. His fierce patriotism and strong determination for the welfare of the common people are the folklore of this land. He indeed belonged to the privileged few who left their footprints on the sands of time.

Biju Babu's life journey began as a student from Ravenshaw Collegiate School and then Ravenshaw College at Cuttack where he was profoundly influenced by Mahatma Gandhiji's call to free India from the British rule. He was imprisoned for two years when he cultivated his association with the underground movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan and Ram Manohar Lohia. Since then he was identified as a pulsating and dynamic leader in the political circle of Odisha. His role in the freedom movement is unforgettable and well remains as an example for the next generation and for all the times to come.

Reckless adventure is a remarkable trait in him as he in his childhood days once broke the police cordon to touch an aeroplane and as a student in Ravenshaw College he undertook an adventurous journey by bicycle from Cuttack to Peshawar, a distance of 4500 miles. Besides a football player he was also a good swimmer who could swim across the river Mahanadi in spate. This spirit of adventure made him a daredevil pilot and among his many heroic acts the one when he displayed exemplary skill and courage by bringing revolutionary leaders from Indonesia in face of stiff opposition from the Dutch is best remembered. He was rightly honoured with 'Bhoomi Putra' (Son of the Soil) award, Indonesia's highest civilian award.

From the very beginning of his childhood, he loved to recall the glorious days when the empire of Kalinga spread from Ganga to Godavari and was known as a maritime power in trade and business that established commercial link with South East Asian countries. The name of Kalinga was very dear to him and he pledged to revive the glorious days and safeguard its prestige in all respects.

For this, he had understood that industrialization holds the key and took a number of initiatives to bring Odisha on the industrial map

of India. His several steps hardly left any field untouched and many of these today like MIG factory at Sunabeda, Thermal Plant at Talcher, Express Highway connecting iron ore deposits of Sukinda with Paradeep stand witness to his dynamism and foresight. Paradeep port which was the brainchild of Biju babu today is the pride of Odisha and the gateway to the State's prosperity. Biju Babu always stressed importance on developing infrastructure to take advantage of the situation. He encouraged and promoted entrepreneurship among the Odias in a big way and told them to be the example to others. He not only concentrated on industrialization but also on education as he was successful in setting up of a number of educational institutions in the State like Regional Engineering College at Rourkela, Regional College of Education and Sainik School at Bhubaneswar. He wanted the youth to harness the power of science and technology to the advantage of Odisha and India. Instituting the prestigious Kalinga Prize for popularization of Science and Technology among the people and entrusting the responsibility to the UNESCO is one of his great endeavour at the international level.

Biju Babu will be fondly remembered for his numerous steps taken in the field of women empowerment, for his sincere efforts to streamline and rejuvenate the Panchayati Raj and local Self Government institutions like taking revolutionary step for reservation of 33 percent of seats for women including S.C. and S.T. women in the three tiers of the Panchayat Raj system. The ideal of raising the nation through village uplift was realized passionately by Biju Babu through the institution of the Panchayati Raj. Today the State celebrates Panchayati Raj Divas on his birth anniversary as a mark of his profound love for Panchayati Raj institution and renews its commitment to realize his dream.

Biju Babu always said that women's participation in public affairs, economic activity and in the social sphere is important for healthy and sustainable growth and must be encouraged. The youth of the State must imbibe the values of patriotism, adventure and commitment from Biju Babu and strive for excellence and progress so

that they can be rightful beneficiaries of Biju Babu's legacy. They must use the available opportunities to equip them with education and skills that will enable them to take forward the process for economic and social emancipation.

Biju Babu was endowed with a remarkable gift of foresight. A visionary to the core, he possessed a lofty passion for the motherland. Perhaps the best example of his passion is found in his words that he used to inspire people and battle defeatism. His indomitable courage and zeal for innovation always kept him focused. One of Biju Babu's chief attributes as a leader was his capability of inspiring people, regardless of seemingly ominous circumstances. The source of this inspiration was his own character. He perpetually demonstrated enthusiasm, determination, courage and optimism.

I sincerely believe that there should be every effort to make the new generation of citizens know the contribution of great leaders to the processes of nation building. This is necessary, not just as a record of historical fact, but to inspire our future generations. Every citizen must know what sacrifices were made by the leaders of the country to achieve Independence. Every child must know what great men and women did to lay the foundation of India they live. Every citizen must know how our Republic was built, brick by brick, to create this magnificent edifice of a new, resurgent India. In that glorious history, Biju Babu's name will always be taken with great honour and respect.

The people of Odisha are inheritors of the great legacy left behind by Biju Babu. They must feel empowered by this legacy. I would like to urge upon the people of Odisha to follow and adhere to this great leader's dreams, ideas and vision in right earnest and strive hard in creating a vibrant, prosperous and developed Odisha of Biju Babu's dream and vision. I salute the memory of Biju Babu.

Jai Hind.

1st Death Anniversary of former Governor of Assam and Former Chief Minister of Odisha Janaki Ballav Patnaik

A year ago today, we shared the grief when former Governor of Assam and former Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Janaki Ballav Patnaik passed away. Although this day brings to mind the sorrow of his passing away, it is also an opportunity to revisit some wonderful memories of him. We gather here on the soil of historic city of Cuttack to pay homage to this great leader and a worthy son of Odisha, who dedicated his life to the cause of the State.

I am thankful for the opportunity to pay my tributes to the good friend Janaki Babu to whom we fondly call JB on his 1st death anniversary. It is a privilege for me to attend his 90th birth anniversary at his Janmabhumi (birth place) at Rameswar on 3rd January this year and I am here with you this evening on his 1st death anniversary at his Karmabhumi (work place).

It is difficult, where to begin, on an occasion like this. Still I am aware of your affection and respect for Janaki Babu and that you are eager to listen to my fond remembrance of him.

Late Janaki Ballav Patnaik was unlike any other man. He was destined to attain great heights in life. We can say of him with as much truth as it was said of one of the greatest of English statesmen, Benjamin Disraeli, "The pilot that weathered the storm." The tributes paid here bear testimony to a life that touched many but did much to restore and enhance the dignity of Odisha.

Born on 3rd January in 1927 at Rameswar near Khurda, Janaki Babu graduated in Sanskrit from Utkal University in 1947 and got Master's Degree in Political Science from Benaras Hindu University in 1949. Cuttack was his Karmabhumi (work place) where he had started his long journey in public life. Young Janaki Babu was a frontline student leader and led student's movement against the British on the call of Mahatma Gandhiji. Influenced by Gandhian principles

he involved himself in many social activities. He chose journalism to serve society and raise voice for those whose pain, injustice, exploitation and concern were never heard and he did it with remarkable ability. His journalistic commitment and devotion ultimately led JB to become the editor of the Odia newspaper "Prajatantra'. He also edited an English daily 'The Eastern Times'.

Janaki Babu entered the political domain and was elected as an M.P. in 1971 for the first time from Cuttack Lok Sabha constituency winning by a margin of over 70, 000 votes. In 1973 he became a Deputy Minister of Defence under Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi and later the Minister of State for Defence. On being re-elected to the Lok Sabha in 1980 he became the Union Minister for Tourism, Civil Aviation and Labour. At the national level he served with distinction and was instrumental in shaping many policies.

On returning to State politics, Mr. Patnaik became the Chief Minister of Odisha in 1980 and he was Chief Minister for three times. During his tenure of 14 years he undertook several pro-people measures and implemented new programmes for all round progress of the State. These were considered as the major drivers of Odisha's present day growth story. His priority was industrial development of Odisha as he felt it was the key to pull Odisha out of backwardness. He laid out an industrial policy with the slogan "Thousand industries in thousand days". The programme promoted entrepreneurship in a big way in the State and created a generation of entrepreneurs, laying a roadmap for future growth of Odisha. He fully deserved all credit for giving the platform for industrial growth in the State. He concentrated on power sector and brought reforms and in the process made Odisha earn the distinction of the first State to open up power generation and distribution to private sector. Consequently, it resulted increase in power generation and Odisha became a power surplus State in 2000.

Janaki Babu always gave importance on agriculture and he gave agriculture the status of industry while implementing novel and innovative programmes for expanding irrigation and providing inputs to increase agriculture production. He devised a number of

programmes to explore the huge potential in tourism sector and wanted that Odisha gets benefitted from this sector. Giving Odia language its rightful due by making it the official language in the State and ensuring that it is used in all government communication is another significant step taken by Janaki Babu.

As Governor of Assam, he undertook social reform measures like the entry of women into 'Kirtan Ghar' (Sanctum Sanctorum) of Patbausi Satra in Central Assam much to the delight of the people. He gave importance to cultural, social and literary exchange programmes between two States to further strengthen relation between Odisha and Assam.

A veteran leader, Janaki Babu had served in various capacities such as Union Minister, Chief Minister, Leader of Opposition in State Assembly and as Governor, that brought out the bright chapters in his chequered political career. In every post he adorned he left a distinct stamp of his class, and leadership.

Janaki Babu not only proved his abilities in politics, but also displayed his versatility by excelling in literature and culture. He was an eminent litterateur and wrote several books and translated the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Shrimad Bhagvat Gita into Odia. He won many literary awards. He edited an intellectual, cultural and literary Odia monthly magazine 'Paurusha' which was very popular with readers and writers and more importantly, it was appreciated for its rich quality and provided a platform for many budding writers and poets to become accomplished writers and poets of today.

Janaki Babu had many milestones in his life. His acts spoke louder than words. Whether in power or out of power and in the face of harshest circumstances Janaki Babu had never ever lost the decorum or decency and this was his hallmark. Janaki Babu truly belonged to the fast disappearing breed of leaders, who not only had the highest intellectual capability and a vision but also had the ways to drive their ideas on ground.

I had great opportunity to know Janaki Babu since long from the days when he was in national politics. The unstinted commitment

to the common good and to the service of the people and the State was always his priority and he deeply touched every one who interacted with him. I found him a multifarious personality and respected for his versatility.

With a disposition as genial as a bright April morning, with a temper that could hardly be ruffled by the most untoward circumstances, with an affection that captivated every one, Janaki Babu also possessed a firmness of purpose, in his determination to do right, even in adverse circumstances.

Janaki Babu was a bright light that enligntened Odisha with its endless wisdom and vision. Although he is no longer with us in mortal form his legacy remains to guide the present generation as they continue their journey to build Odisha of his dream. Known for his humility and good leadership, his enduring legacy, I am sure will continue to glow in the hearts of his well-wishers and of those who believe in him.

Today I am happy to release a book on Janaki Babu containing memoirs and articles on him by famous writers and present awards instituted in his memory to eminent persons. I am also happy that the Janaki Ballav Memorial Foundation was constituted by intellectuals from different walks of life of Cuttack city and wish it all success in its endeavours to promote this noble soul's memory and legacy. With these words, I once again pay my respect and tribute to Janaki Babu.

Jai Hind.

Ambedkar Memorial Lecture 2016

I am delighted to be here for this Ambedkar Memorial Lecture for the year 2016 organised by Ambedkar Chair of Social Work in NISWASS (National Institute of Social Work and Social Sciences). I understand that the Chair instituted by Dr. Ambedkar Foundation under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been regularly organizing the annual Ambedkar Memorial Lecture since 1994. I am happy to note that Ambedkar Memorial lecture provides a platform to articulate views on subjects and topics which Dr. Ambedkar himself had addressed and those which continue to be relevant today. I am thankful to the organisers for giving me this opportunity to be on this memorial lecture.

Let me at the outset pay my respect and homage to Bharat Ratna Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar on his 125th birth anniversary. The nation proudly recollects his vision and genius. He was an outstanding leader of our freedom struggle and the principal architect of the Indian Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar was a staunch crusader for the rights of the down-trodden and backward sections of our society, for gender equality and fought for equal rights for women in inheritance and marriage.

He was a scholar, journalist, educationist, legal luminary, social reformer and political leader. A voracious reader, Dr. Ambedkar saw education as a tool for the liberation of the socially backward from illiteracy, ignorance and superstition. He founded the People's Education Society in 1945 with the aim of advancing the educational interests of weaker sections of society. Dr. Ambedkar was also a crusader for upholding the basic rights of the underprivileged and marginalized sections of the society.

Dr. Ambedkar dreamt of an India in which all sections of society are empowered – socially, economically and politically; an India in which every section of our population believes that they have an equal stake in the country and its future and an India in which social status will be decided not by standing in caste hierarchy or economic

wealth but by individual merit. Dr. Ambedkar's vision was of an India where the social system and economy would permit the full development of human potential and ensure a dignified existence for all our citizens.

This year's memorial lecture on 'Policies for Equity in Higher Education: Challenge of Growing Unequal Access' on Dr. Ambedkar's 125th birth anniversary is a fitting tribute to him and it surely holds immense significance in realizing his dream.

Over six decades after its adoption, the Constitution has become the uniting spirit of our nation, guiding it through an unprecedented national and global social and political change. It draws its strength today from the aspirations of common people which find voice in its preamble and its provisions. Its dream of social justice, liberty, equality and fraternity continues to inspire not only India but developing countries across the world.

The ennobling vision and values of the Constitution have sometimes faced challenges. It is up to us to safeguard the Constitution and its values from such challenges. As has been said the Constitution has not failed us. We have to ensure that we do not fail the Constitution.

Dr. Ambedkar's message, work and life are a constant reminder of the essential need of preserving and promoting the basic structures of the Constitution and unity and integrity of our motherland. At the same time, it also reminds us of the distance we still need to travel in building an egalitarian society where there will be no distinction between man and man.

The vision of Dr. Ambedkar guides us to strengthen our commitment for realising the dream of social justice and empowerment. Each one of us has a responsibility to do our utmost to make Dr. Ambedkar's dreams come true. We must do everything possible to preserve and strengthen our democracy. We must engage in combined and committed efforts to overcome inequality and prejudice. Lectures such as this, will guide us in this endeavour.

The subject of the lecture is close to my heart since as Chancellor it is always my responsibility and endeavour to make the concept of equity in higher education and inclusion for all a reality. Let me congratulate Prof. Thorat for his enlightening lecture.

Education is the most important instrument for social, economic and political transformation of any society. It is the most potent tool for socio-economic mobility and a key instrument for building an equitable and just society. The higher education provides a strong knowledge base in many fields and as we saw the investment made in this sector since independence contributed to economic development, social progress and strengthening of democracy in the country. We have made remarkable progress and now we have the 2nd largest higher education system in the world. Yet despite the horizontal expansion it is found that many are still left out from the benefits of higher education and the system is under stress to ensure equity and produce skilled human resource equipped with adequate knowledge and technical skills to cater to the demands of the economy.

A sound higher education system is essential for the growth and development of any economy. The policies have to be aimed at the overall development of the country. The growth should not be skewed in certain sector. We already had many policies to increase the enrollment of the marginalized, rural and female population in higher education. However, there exists a significant gap between the enrollment of students in higher education with respect to background and gender.

By not providing the opportunities for developing the skills and competence of a major proportion of potential human resource of the country, we cannot be successful in transforming India into a world power. Any society can march toward progress only by inclusive development plans and policies which ensure the empowerment of the weaker sections. We must consider promoting an inclusive learning environment to bring about greater participation, equity, equality and emancipation for all without any differentiation.

In fact, process is only as good as the values and beliefs of the people who put them into action. Inclusion may be best looked at as a process, in which students and teachers are all valued equally. But it does not mean they are all treated as the same. There is 'no one size fits all' in education.

Some have special needs, some have learning difficulties, some simply struggle. In the past, many people believed that these students had to change to fit into the system. That thinking must be challenged.

If the attitudes, structures and processes of the system are failing our young people, then it is not the young people who should change – it is the system itself which must change. That is what we mean by inclusion.

The cultures, policies and practices in higher education institutions must adapt and respond to the diversity of students. We must identify opportunities, tailor education to the learner. We must invest in people and local solutions. We must be willing to learn.

And students with differences must not be looked at as having problems to overcome. All students have potential, and their diversity must be celebrated and embraced. We need to evolve a pathway for education which has at its very heart the aspirations of learners. Strengthening this pathway will remain a focus for the future. However, we need to accelerate the performance of the whole education system with appropriate remedies to ensure that our young men and women enjoy success in whatever setting they are.

The challenge of access to and equity in higher education has been a policy area of great concern to the Government and I have been consistently stressing on the importance of education beyond high school. We are aware of the importance of higher education in leading to higher earnings and greater economic mobility, and therefore, its role as a determinant of one of the most important aspirations of families across the country, the ability of our youth to realize their full potential.

Making education work for all requires the concerted efforts of many. We must make the most of every opportunity. Slowly, but

surely, we are making progress. But there is much more to be done. That's why the Government is currently focusing upon formulation of the policies for equity in higher education.

I would like to congratulate you all on the valuable work you do in promoting inclusiveness and equity in higher education. I am sure such endeavour must continue with renewed vigour.

Thank you again for inviting me to speak to you today. And I wish you all the very best.

Jai Hind.



Hon'ble Governor at 45th Convocation of Utkal University on 25 April 2013



At First Alexander Duff Memorial Lecture on 184th Foundation Day Celebration of Scottish Church College, Kolkata on 13 May 2013



At a Seminar on Crisis in Gender Justice on 20 May 2013



At First Foundation Day Celebration of AIIMS, Bhubaneswar on 1st July 2013



At the release of Odia translation of Novel KOTTA of Dr. M. Veerappa Moily on 28 July, 2013



Hon'ble Governor releases the Book on Modernism and Post-Modernism on 27 December 2013



Hon'ble Governor inaugurates MSME International Trade Fair on 01 January 2014



Governor addresses on 34th Foundation Day of NALCO on 06 January 2014



At Valedictory Session of Consultative Workshop on "Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for Leadership" on 24 January 2014



Hon'ble Governor at the National Voters' Day programme on 25 January.2014



Hon'ble Governor and First Lady at Adivasi Mela on 09 February 2014



Releasing the Book 'Gotie Jiban Jatesta Nuhen' on 10February 2014



Releasing a publication during 83^{rd} Annual Meeting of The Association of Indian Universities on 25 February 2014



Hon'ble Governor Dr. S.C. Jamir is conferred Degree of Honoris Causa on the 2^{nd} Annual Convocation of Shri J.J. Tiberwala University, Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan on 26 February 2014



At 36^{th} Annual Regional Conference of Eastern Region of YMCAs at Cuttack on 20 June 2014



At Valedictory function of launching ceremony of Trust "India Against Negativity" on 31 August 2014



At 19th Convocation of Berhampur University on 17 September 2014



At 6th Convocation of VSSUT, Burla on 03 November 2014



Inauguration of Neuro Update-2015 on 28 February 2015



At International Conference on 'India and Indian Ocean- Renewing the Maritime Trade and Civilisation Linkages' on 22 March 2015



Governor pays obeisance before the statue of Lord Buddha on Buddha Mahotsav at Maniabandh, Cuttack on 04 May 2015



Inauguration of 'Kalinga-Indonesia Dialogue: Structure & Culture' on 14 November 2016



Inauguration of 16^{th} State Jamborette and 1^{st} Tribal Jamborette of Scouts and Guides on 10 December 2015



Governor releases a Souvenir at the closing ceremony of International Conference -2015 on 29 December 2015



At the inauguration of First Year Lab. Complex of IIT, Bhubaneswar on 02 January 2016



At 35th Convocation of Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology on 17 February 2016



At the Birth Centenary Celebration of Former Chief Minister of Odisha Late Biju Patnaik on 05 March 2016.



At 7th Convocation of Biju Patnaik University of Technology, Rourkela on 17 April 2016.



At 1st death anniversary of Former Chief Minister of Odisha Late Janaki Ballav Pattnaik on 21 April 2016.



At Centenary Celebration of Circuit Sitting of High Court of Orissa on 18 May 2016



Hon'ble Governor and First Lady at the inauguration of the 4th Annual Conference of Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India on 24 October 2016.



Hon'ble Governor delivers the convocation address at the 3rd Convocation of Sri Sri University on 18 November 2016



At Closing Function of 10th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics on 18 December 2016



S.C. Jamir - or simply Jamir to one and all in Nagaland and Delhi - was born in 1931 to Senayangba, a Dobashi and fought enemy within and outside to conquer the nagative forces that life threw at him. Then very early in life, a sort of reality dawned on the young Chubatoshi - that is what Jamir's name is - that his emancipation was not in a Government job, however high profile that might have been. Jamir had shown the true Naga grit; rather tenacity in building brick by brick a formidable reputation that he belonged to the soil! The first MP from Nagaland, he served as Parliamentary Secretary to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the early 19 sixties and Union Minister in late 19 sixties. Then in 1971, an offer came from the highest office in the country to go as Ambassador to Australia which young Jamir, after a sleepless night, had politely declined and returned to Nagaland.

He became Chief Minister four times, thereafter served as Governor of Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat. At present he is the Governor of Odisha.

He travelled to many nations, and has served in a number of committees. A survivor of four assassination attempts, he is as sprightly as ever, reading and writing a lot to keep his mind and soul fresh and routinely plays badminton to be physically fit. Jamir has been a prolific writer and this book is testimony to that. For his contribution to the higher education sector, he received Honoris Cause from four major universities.

As Governor, he has endeared himself to the people of Odisha.